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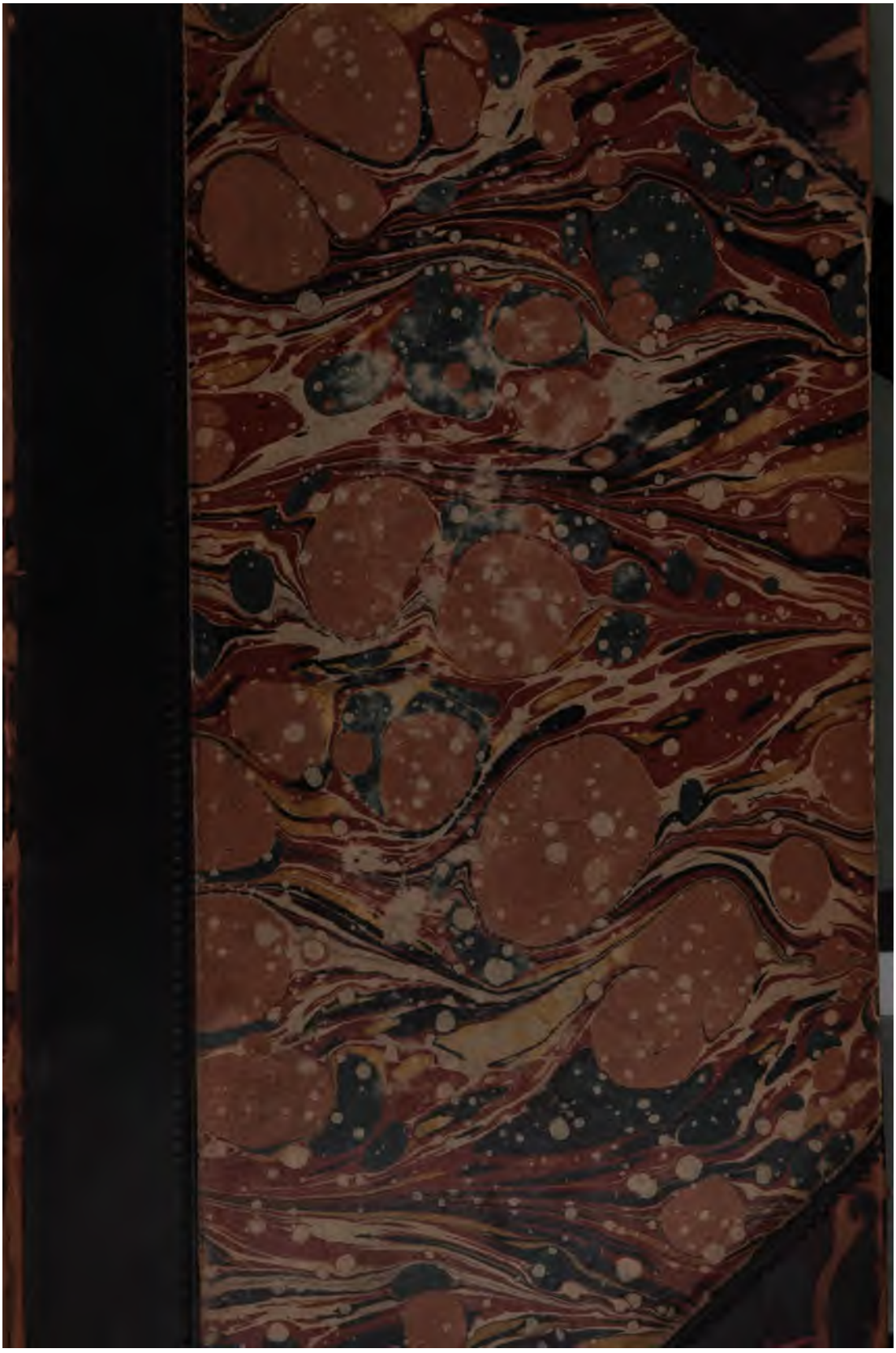

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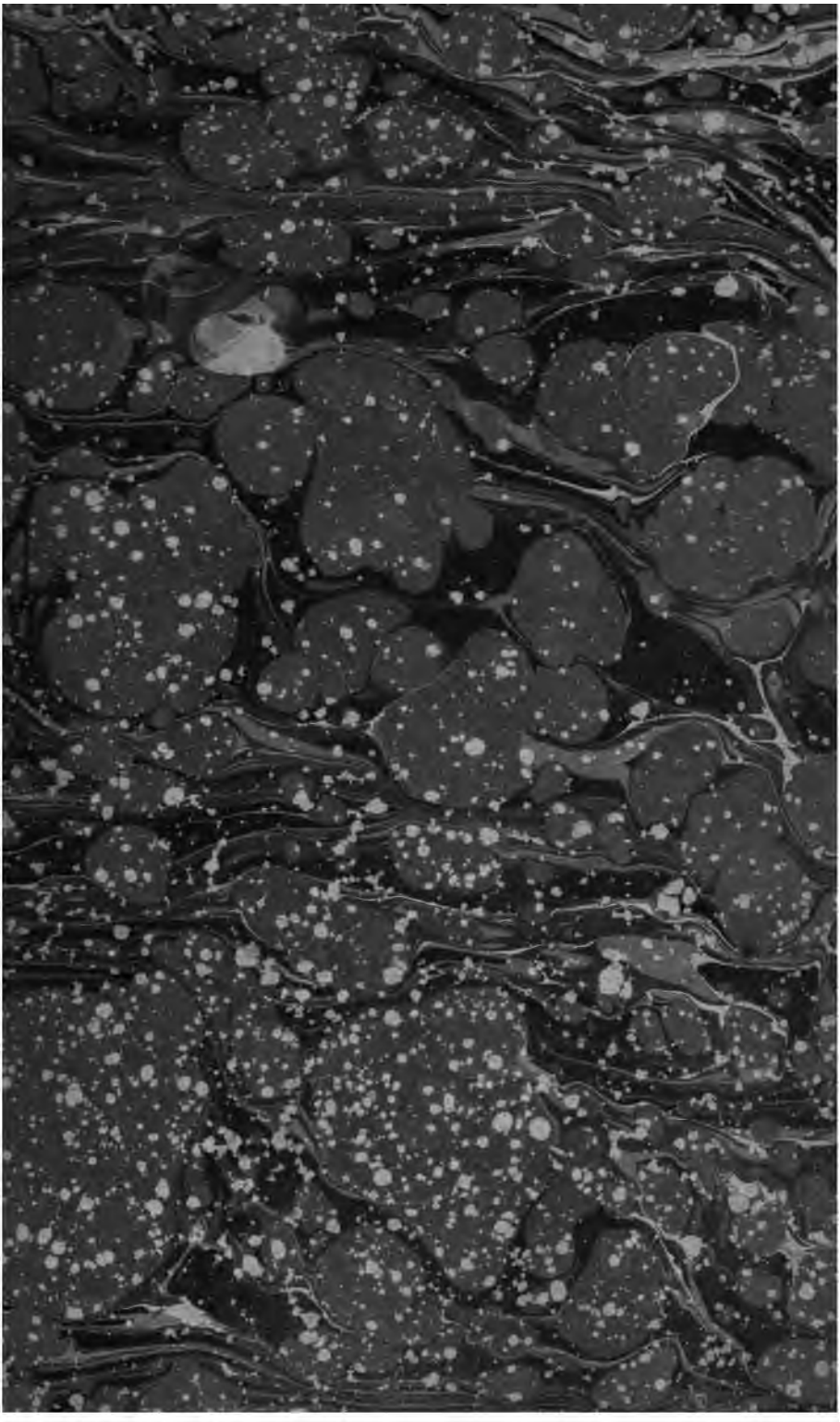

Votre très humble et très obéissant
serviteur / Le Comte de Mirabeau

MEMOIRS

OF

MIRABEAU:

BIOGRAPHICAL, LITERARY, AND POLITICAL.

BY HIMSELF,

HIS FATHER, HIS UNCLE, AND HIS ADOPTED CHILD.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

DUMONT says, in his work * on the extraordinary man whose private life, hitherto so little known, forms the subject of the following volumes,—"Mirabeau had a son five or six years old, whose mother I did not know. The poor boy was loved and neglected by his father. 'That child,' said Mirabeau, by way of praise, 'has a ferocious heart.' He thought that everything connected with the blood of a Mirabeau must needs be extraordinary. Finding the poor child very much neglected, I caressed and fondled him, and was much surprised at seeing this pretended ferocious little animal take my hands, not to bite, but to kiss them. He appeared to me of an amiable disposition, and might easily have been managed with a little affectionate care."

* Recollections of Mirabeau, by Etienne Dumont, of Geneva, p. 249 of the Third Edition. London: Churton.

Mirabeau died soon after, and bequeathed this child to the "affectionate care" of his sister, by whom he was brought up. The poor little neglected boy grew into man's estate; and after struggling during a quarter of a century to fulfil the last wishes of his father, namely, that of justifying his memory to the world, has at length accomplished the task in the volumes, a translation of which is here offered to the public.

As a legislator and a statesman, as the greatest orator that modern times has produced, Mirabeau will be known to the remotest posterity. But much ignorance prevails respecting his private life; and the letters from the Donjon of Vincennes have led to so many unfounded surmises, to so much calumny, that a foul stain has hitherto remained upon the memory of the most remarkable man of the last century, whose premature death, soon after the outbreak of the French revolution, led to the overthrow of a monarchy which he alone could have saved.

The materials upon which these Memoirs are founded consist of the private papers of the Mirabeau family, all in the possession of the author, who has given from them copious extracts of a highly interesting nature, and corroborative of all he advances. He has triumph-

antly refuted the calumnies cast upon Mirabeau, whose errors he has, however, exposed without disguise or concealment, and laid open his whole life in a work which contains much new and valuable information, and so many sources of gratification and excitement, that it will naturally be read with great avidity.

A translation of these Memoirs has been eagerly demanded for some time past; and the publisher, anxious to meet the wishes of the public, has spared no exertion to bring it out as speedily as possible. The extreme difficulty of this translation proved a great obstacle at first, as few persons, however conversant with the French language, are able perfectly to comprehend some parts of the original, especially the extracts from the correspondence between the Marquis of Mirabeau and the Bailli, his brother, written in a style as singular as it is forcible and piquant. Should the present volumes satisfy public expectation, they will shortly be followed by the remainder of the work.

London, February 20th, 1835.

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Quant à l'histoire de Sophie ! écoutez-moi ; je vous jure devant Dieu que Sophie serait prête pour le poison si je voulais vous le donner ; elle était décidée à ne pas subir la privation de sa liberté, par même momentanée ; c'est la femme la plus douce, la plus aimable, la plus aimante que j'aie jamais ; mais la plus impérieuse aussi l'être le plus tranquille. mon tort et l'amour peut-il n'avoir pas un tel tort lorsqu'il est si jeune, si chaud, si persécuté ? mon tort est de l'avoir affichée parmi mes meilleures imprudences ; tout le reste, comme je l'ai dit, a été irrémédiablement enchaîné. je le savais alors comme je le sais aujourd'hui, que c'était la plus grande des folies que de l'enlever mais devais-je me laisser croire ingrat et pusillanime ? que dire ? devais-je lui laisser avaler la coupe fatale, comme je ne pouvais douter qu'elle le devait ? voilà dans quel point de vue il faut les juger, ô mon amie, et vous serez épouvantée alors c'est moi et non pas elle que j'aurai sacrifié. il n'était plus question de délicatesse ; il était question ou de la vie ou de la mort pour moi, je balançai.

vous me faites le plus grand plaisir en me rassurant sur votre bonheur domestique,
qui est un fond de premier ordre des bonheurs, parce qu'il est le plus continuel. Hélas ! mon
ami, j'avais mes raisons, de trop bonnes raisons pour craindre que votre sort ne fut en
effet d'être jaloux ! Tous mes malheurs viennent dans leur origine d'avoir trop que
d'être jaloux ; mon père que la nature avait fait trop grand pour qu'il pût lui être permis
mon père ; mon père qui autant de supériorité sur moi par le génie, qu'il en a
par l'âge et le titre de père ; mon père dont j'ai dû craindre l'ingénuité et imprudence
+ il y a plus de 10 ans de lui la jalousie ces mots cachaient que pour mon malheur, il était trop vrai !
hélas ! quand vous saurez que de l'amour propre, mes sentiments seraient-ils purs en-
tous les cœurs ? ... enfin mon père se conduit en ce moment avec une générosité tardive et
certe, mais rare. Il m'a payé ; je vous arracherai une larme de lui, me voilà ~
payé de tout ce que son despotisme m'a fait perdre d'honnêteté.

INTRODUCTION.

In 1783, Mirabeau adopted a child born the preceding year. His affection for this child was that of a fond parent; and during the remainder of his eventful life he was never separated from it, even while travelling. On his death-bed, Mirabeau left his adopted son to the kindness of his friends; and, as if he anticipated that their sterile and silent admiration would remain inactive in defending his memory against the attacks of party hatred, he bequeathed the task of such defence to this orphan, whose education he confided to his sister, Madame du Saillant. She was directed to teach him his duties, and to assist him, so far as she was able, in the fulfilment of his task.

This noble-minded woman faithfully executed her brother's trust. I am the orphan, and shall endeavour, in like manner, to fulfil the duty imposed upon me.

Mirabeau is one of the men of modern times who have excited the public attention in a very extraordinary degree; nevertheless he is also one of those of whom the public knows the least. The statements, libels, notices,

and volumes, which, for the last fifty years, have been written upon this highly gifted man, are all equally devoid of truth.

Being entrusted with this family mission, and in possession of all the papers relative to his family connexions, I have, by dint of arduous research and patient investigation, acquired evidence of my assertion. This evidence I now submit to the public.

I take three distinct views of the character of Mirabeau:

First, as a private individual;

Secondly, as a literary man and a political writer;

Thirdly, as a legislator and a statesman.

I could have wished, with regard to his private character, that it had depended upon me to say little; but others having, through hatred, thoughtlessness, or interested motives, exhausted all the calumnies that malice could devise, and given great importance to the most trivial errors of Mirabeau's youth, and to his family quarrels, it has become my duty to reduce these exaggerations to the standard of truth, refute the slander with which they are impregnated, admit and explain every fact I have ascertained to be true, and show, by undeniable evidence, that whenever in his private life he yielded to his passions,—and this was much less frequent than is generally imagined—he was really more unfortunate than guilty. As a literary man and a political writer, his merit could not be duly

appreciated, except by a thorough examination of his different works. In my account of them, I have traced the motive, and shown the effect of each of his writings, and also why they were undertaken. I have proved that he had no share whatever in several works attributed to him, and I have indicated how far he was concerned in those of which he was not the sole author.

With regard to his character as a legislator and a statesman, I have related his acts in that double capacity, both in the National Assembly and elsewhere, during the progress of the revolution, which event had his most active support during fifteen years. His own earnest exertions had tended to bring it about, and he contributed, more than any other man, to its results. In his private and political correspondence, as in his senatorial labours, I have shown him such as he was all his life: attached to the interests of the people, and at the same time favourable to the principles of monarchy; a consistent and wary adversary, an ardent and courageous enemy both of anarchy and of despotism. I have transcribed a few of his speeches which have already appeared in print; from others, I have merely extracted a few passages—the remainder, I have analysed, adding, according to their dates, and the subjects they treat of, several important speeches which he had prepared, and of which his premature death deprived the public. Finally, I have given the

substance of the letters and papers which Mirabeau addressed, towards the close of his life, to the king and queen; also that of the plans he had formed, and partially executed, to defend both the constitution and the monarchy against those who first endeavoured to undermine the throne, and ultimately succeeded in overthrowing it. These were the men who sullied the purity of the revolution, so necessary in principle, and for a time endangered its lawful effects.

Such has been my object; I will now state the means whereby it has been accomplished. Hitherto, Mirabeau, especially in his private character, has scarcely ever been described, except by malevolent writers whose statements have been adopted without examination by their successors. The former have carefully ransacked all the calumnies contained in the judicial papers published against Mirabeau, also in his letters from Vincennes, which were purloined and altered, as I shall prove, and lastly, in the furious libels directed against his financial plans by the hatred of stock-jobbers. With regard to his labours as a statesman, it is well known that the judgment passed upon them was dictated by political enmity.

I have likewise directed my researches to other channels, and although I have often had to refute the assertions of Mirabeau's enemies, I have never applied to his friends for any of my materials.

The first thirty years of Mirabeau's life were almost

wholly spent with his father the Marquis, and his uncle the Bailli of Mirabeau, both men of superior intellect, though little known; both sedate, austere, and religious; men of learning, and of genius; noble-minded and generous, resembling each other in many particulars, but different in this respect, that the father possessed the stern inflexibility of a despot, and a turn of mind purely speculative, whilst the Bailli allowed his reason to be convinced, and his mind to be swayed by the dictates and lessons of a practical philosophy, the severity of which was entirely directed against himself.

Firmly attached to each other by the tenderest affection, by a community of interests, and above all, by the almost fanatical pride of lineage, but never residing together, the two brothers, during a period of fifty years, wrote to each other more than four thousand letters, hitherto unpublished, and which are in my possession. In those written from 1750 to 1784, Mirabeau's name occurs in almost every page. He was the constant object of the brother's solicitude, as a child, as a youth, and as a man; and the more so, because he always resided with one of them, and during the eleven following years he remained dependent upon them. This correspondence, therefore, reflects his character, as in a domestic mirror. Extracts from this correspondence compose nearly the first volume of my work, which may thus be considered a mere compilation.

In writing the private life of Mirabeau, I have borrowed largely from these family letters, as likewise from those of Mirabeau to his father, his uncle, his mother, his wife, and his sisters; from those to Madame de Mounier, and to several of his friends, Boucher, Lafage, Dupont de Nemours, and others. These hitherto unpublished and unknown documents show the suspicions and accusations against him, and from them also are deduced explanations in justification of his life, emanating not from Mirabeau himself, but from his witnesses, his detractors, and his natural judges.

With regard to Mirabeau's public life, I have consulted not only those works which purport to give an account of it, but a number of letters which he wrote to public characters, and also the numerous manuscripts which he left me for the purpose of vindicating his character.

The book I here present to the public is not one of those compilations in which well-known facts are republished, with some slight alterations; neither does it resemble those supposed memoirs which have lately been so much in vogue. Not the slightest doubt can possibly be raised as to the authenticity of the facts I have advanced. The original documents are in my possession, and any person may inspect them by applying to me. I shall further add, that were even that not the case, every doubt would be removed by the

perusal of two pages of any of the hitherto unpublished documents which compose the greatest part of this work.

There are some things that cannot be invented: it would baffle the ingenuity of the ablest fabricator of apocryphal memoirs to imagine, for instance, one of the hundred letters, one of the thousand pages which I have transcribed, written by the Marquis and the Bailli of Mirabeau. Fastidious critics may find fault with the style; better and purer may certainly exist, but none could describe with more wit and spirit, situations and characters so perfectly unlike any thing in our present state of society,—none could express more forcibly the unflinching severity of these two brothers, constituting themselves judges, the one of his son, the other of his nephew. I even doubt that any writer ever possessed greater power and originality of expression.

I will not further extend this introduction to a book which is not a panegyric, but a work written from the most conscientious motives; neither will I speak of myself—for I have not once thought of myself in this work of duty. I will not even attempt to excuse the imperfections of my labours, which filial love alone prompted me to undertake. My education, which Mirabeau did not live to commence, has not, perhaps, qualified me for the task; and circumstances have

constantly occurred to prevent me from adopting literary pursuits. I do not think it necessary to speak of the delay which has taken place in the publication of this work, because the cause, in itself, is, to a certain degree, an answer to one of the most unjust charges by which the memory of Mirabeau has been stigmatised. If this man, who has been accused of having *sold* himself, had not died without fortune, poverty would not have forced his adopted son to put off the fulfilment of this most sacred duty, during more than thirty years, spent in an obscure employment, the duties of which were both irksome and laborious.

These are the only observations I shall make regarding myself; but I must here offer my grateful acknowledgments to those friends of truth, genius, and civic renown, who have favoured me with their valuable communications. I shall, however, only mention by name the late MM. Frochot and Pellenc, confidential friends and fellow-labourers of Mirabeau; M. de Comps, his trusty and devoted secretary; his niece, Madame Sirey, the daughter of his sister, whose talents and cultivated mind are worthy of her origin; the Duke of Bassano, whose early political labours were performed under the eyes of Mirabeau, whose friendship and esteem he enjoyed; the venerable Doctor Ysabeau, who at Gien was the guardian angel of Sophie, as, at Vincennes, Boucher was Mirabeau's guardian angel;

M. Ernest de Blosseville, the author of a work breathing the noblest philosophy *, and M. Pontier, a learned bookseller of Aix, who, with much kindness and disinterestedness, furnished me with a part of the family correspondence, extracts from which, written by the only competent judges of Mirabeau's character, will effectually vindicate his youth from the aspersions of his detractors.

LUCAS MONTIGNY.

January, 1834.

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* History of the Penal Colonies of Great Britain in Australia, Paris, 1831,—a work which gained the Montyon prize at the French Academy.

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK I.

WHEN a man has occupied the thoughts, and excited the attention of his contemporaries, and has exercised great influence over his own and subsequent epochs, he, and all that relates to him, become objects of public curiosity. The world investigates what he has been, judges all his actions, and desires to be made acquainted with his origin, the particulars of his early life, those relating to his family, the causes that have acted upon him, the inspirations that have prompted him, and ultimately, by what secret, slow, and almost imperceptible degrees he became a public man, and effected those results which have left so deep an imprint upon the past, and will transmit to remote posterity the tale of his brief existence.

Mirabeau has been, and is still, the especial object of this kind of curiosity. It has been said of him, that his moral nature, more than that of any other man, was sub-

ordinate to his physical nature, of which it was the exact, but involuntary and forced counterpart; that private, not less than public circumstances, made him what he was; that individualities of family, as well as circumstances of time and place, also exercised their influence over him. Nothing is more true. No man at his birth had his future life traced out with greater precision, through the accident of noble birth, the moral and physical organisation of his ancestors, and the peculiar temperament of his family. No man ever proved in a more clear and striking manner that great principle of nature, by which, for the perpetuation of the different races, successive generations transmit to each other their forms, their faculties, their wants and their appetites, their good qualities and their defects.

Such was the character of the singular race of the Mirabeaus, that they alone could have given birth to the subject of these memoirs; he could not have been produced in any other family. This truth will be admitted by all who read the hitherto unpublished notice which Mirabeau devoted to the memory of his ancestors, especially to that of his grandfather, the Marquis John Anthony. This notice was written in the author's youth, and we place it at the commencement of our book, because it forms the most appropriate introduction, and is, in our estimation, worthy of Mirabeau, although at that period of his life he was only

an inexperienced writer. It relates many noble actions and useful services; it gives descriptions of striking characters, hitherto unknown, and presents a multitude of energetic and extraordinary facts, both comic and sublime. It presents, in short, an animated picture of times so essentially different from ours. But what enhances its value is, that without serving as an excuse for what is reprehensible in Mirabeau's private life, this lively family picture explains it in part, showing that parents such as his must naturally have had such a son, and that Mirabeau, descending from them, could not have been other than he was.

We have therefore transcribed this notice as he wrote it at the Château d' If, towards the close of 1774; and we have faithfully copied the autograph manuscript, with the exception of some particulars which we give in the form of notes, thinking that they interfered with the narrative. We have also considered it advisable to add to these notes, as explanatory remarks, some extracts from the unpublished private writings of Mirabeau's father, surnamed "The Friend of Men." These extracts are interesting, and being often necessary to our work, we hope that our arrangement will meet with the reader's approbation.

LIFE OF JOHN ANTHONY DE RIQUETI, MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU, TOGETHER WITH A NOTICE OF HIS FAMILY, WRITTEN BY HIS ELDEST GRANDSON, FROM THE NOTES OF HIS SON.

MEN are sons before they bear any other title, or enjoy any right. Filial respect is therefore the first duty of man, and, from that very circumstance, becomes the first social tie, and the beginning of public and private morals. The seed of filial respect, carried even to superstition, which has evidently been sown within us by nature, appears to have been the chief means by which the peculiar manners of that privileged empire* have been maintained, which, during forty centuries have remained stationary, amid the vicissitudes of the world. It may moreover be asserted, that all the public institutions of the ancients, as they declined with the morals of the people, showed more particular symptoms of decay, in proportion as filial respect and parental authority became weaker.

Every man endowed with sense and feeling, must therefore consider it his bounden duty to strengthen unremittingly, under his own roof, those domestic ties which bind the great family of human society. This duty is the more imperative, because everything tends to overthrow or displace its strong and ancient founda-

* China.—*Editor.*

tions,—because a false civilisation destroys the social union, dissolves the bond of general interest, to assemble individual interests in contemptible groups, and makes the calculations of heartless selfishness usurp the place of lofty public virtue. Low and disgraceful vices succeed the vices of ferocity; no other qualities are acknowledged but those which distinguish the reed among shrubs, for we are become weak, pliant, smooth, and easily corrupted.

Ever since I can remember, I have seen my father and uncle celebrate and honour the memory of our ancestors, several of whom were illustrious, not through courtly favour, or from the wages of servility, but by manly virtues, and services rendered to their country, the true and only source of real fame. I despair of imitating them, impossible as it is for me to endeavour to follow their footsteps; but I will at least hold up their example to my children. I employ the leisure moments now forced upon me, in collecting family traditions which would soon be consigned to oblivion, and in sketching the character of my grandfather. I will use the most strenuous endeavours to save his memory from the unmerited oblivion into which it would otherwise fall, by relating several interesting and extraordinary anecdotes, several truly heroic actions, which illustrate a character certainly not faultless, and whose good qualites were characterised by inequality and excess, but which was great and noble. The blemishes which human

weakness may have imparted to that character, far from diminishing its lustre, served only to make it stand out in more prominent relief.

In 1267 and 1268, during one of those revolutions to which the constant struggle between the empire and the sacerdotal power gave rise, the family of the Arrighetti, conspicuous in the party of the Gibelines, were driven from Florence. The act of proscription mentions the names of nine individuals of this family, and among others, *Azzucius Arrighetti, filius Gherardi, et omnes masculi descendentes ex eis.* Azzucius and his son Peter retired into Provence, where the former died in 1294. Peter Gherardus and Ugolinus were the children of Azzo Arrighetti, and the filiation substantiated by more original and authentic documents than could have been expected in a country laid waste by religious wars and party quarrels, has continued in a direct line from the head of our house who settled in France, down to the writer of the present notice. *

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* These are the names of the Riqueti and their wives since their settlement in France:—

Azzo was the father of Gherardus.

Azzucius, or Azzucio, of Peter.

Peter, of Anthony	Sibilla of Fos, of the House of the Counts of Provence. Several Troubadours made her the theme of their lays.
Anthony, of James	Catherine of Cadenet.
James, of another Anthony . . .	Louisa of Pontevès.

It would be out of place here to trace a genealogical table: such puerile vanity would be appreciated at its true worth. It is contemptible to borrow lustre from a species of merit so perfectly unconnected with personal endowments, and which can be claimed by so many. It appears to us more appropriate to render due homage, in a kind of introduction, to the memory of our ancestors, and to the virtues of those whose actions dwell in the remembrance of men, in spite of the darkness and ignorance of the times in which they lived. We are free to confess, that to render this notice not altogether incomplete, we ought to have been able to make further researches, which might indeed have proved unsuccessful, but which we have not even had an opportunity of attempting. We here give all that we have gleaned from tradition, family papers, and the notices collected by the Marquis of Mirabeau.

Anthony II, of Honorius . . . Catherine of Lauthoin.
Honorius I, of John . . . . . Joan Tilhere.
John, of another Honorius . . . Margaret of Glandevès.
Honorius II, of Thomas . . . . Joan of Lenche.
Thomas, of Honorius III. . . . Anne de Pontevès of Buons.
Honorius III, of John Anthony . Elizabeth of Rochmore.
John Anthony, of Victor . . . Frances of Castellane.
Victor, of Honorius, Gabriel, and Boniface . . . } Geneviève of Vassan.

The celebrity of the "Friend of Men" is universally known. Whichever of his sons nature has destined to survive him, will pay him the same tribute of which the writer now acquits himself to his grandfather!—*Note by Mirabeau.*

It is ascertained that the Arrighetti appeared in Provence with the rank and spirit of the high nobles of those days. They carefully preserved the pre-eminence of their order, purchased fiefs, held military commissions, founded hospitals, and endowed religious houses. Their motto was JUVAT PIETAS. Peter, settled on the very confines of France, on the summit of a mountain, (Seyne, where the family of the Arrighetti then settled, is the first town situated amid the Alps) founded an hospital almost immediately after his arrival. This fact, well known in the country, is attested by a judicial and municipal enquiry which John de Riqueti took care to have made when the hospital was destroyed. Our ancestors founded, at Marseilles, the convents of the Jesuits, the Chartreux, the Récolets, and other religious houses. Such foundations were the prevalent mania of the times, but it was extraordinary that the Arrighetti should indulge in it, as, during a period of nearly six hundred years, not one of the family had ever entered holy orders, with, however, one exception, and that at a comparatively recent period ; but, as we shall hereafter show, the person alluded to had but little vocation for the church. Every member of our family appears to have possessed an ardent and active mind, which is the leading characteristic of our race.

They sought betimes to render themselves useful. Peter married Sibilla of Fos, whose beauty and accom-

plishments were celebrated by the troubadours. This marriage proves the respect in which the proscribed family were held, since immediately on their arrival in the country where they had sought an asylum, they were enabled to form so brilliant an alliance.

His son, Anthony I, was judex-magnus of the province. This office corresponds with the dignity of grand seneschal. The judgments of the judex-magnus, who was a military magistrate, were without appeal, Provence at that period having no parliament*, and justice was administered in his name throughout the whole province. It was probably this Anthony, proved by his holding so high an office to have been no ordinary man, especially at a period when favour alone was not considered to confer merit, who removed with his family to Digne†.

James, the son of this Anthony, purchased, in 1412,

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* Some judgments still exist, rendered in the name of Anthony de Riqueti, at Marseilles, Digne, and Terrascon—that is to say, at the three extremities of the province.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

† Anthony died in 1412, (*note by the editor*). The tradition of the country, confirmed by a great number of manuscripts, attributes to this Anthony the iron chain which is still to be seen at Moustier. It crosses from one mountain to another, and in the middle there is a large star with five points, which has led to the opinion that the chain was placed there by a knight of the house of Blacas, the arms of that family having a similar star. It is said that the singular idea of chaining two mountains together originated in the fulfilment of a vow made at sea, by the Chevalier Anne de Riqueti, about the year 1390.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

the co-lordship of the town of Riez, then a bishop's see. We still possess the deed of purchase.

Another Riqueti was at the same period Lord of Sièyes. Two generations later, these different branches removed to Marseilles, where our house acquired its true lustre by deeds of public service. It was Honorius I, grandson of James de Riqueti, who made the family settle at Marseilles.

Those days did not resemble the periods when power and the curb of obedience, being concentrated in the sovereign authority, a few metropolitan cities, from the increased means of communications, and the great influx of the precious metals from the mines of the new world, reduced every other city to the rank and denomination of second-rate towns. In those days a republican spirit pervaded every town, more especially the prosperous commercial cities. A number of these cities recently united under the denomination of the "Hanseatic league," formed an association which not only secured their liberties, but established their independence; and they soon after declared war, in their own name, and formed alliances with the Northern powers.

Marseilles, always celebrated as a commercial city, was subject to the Roman sway, but as an ally. Its situation, its maritime advantages, the barrenness of its territory which left to its inhabitants no other resource than their industry, and more especially the spirit of enterprise shown by the Greek commercial

navigators who were the founders of that city, had rendered it, in ancient times, the principal entrepôt of all the trade of the seas then frequented. Marseilles had acknowledged as sovereigns the counts of the house of Anjou, but with stipulations that left it in a sort of independence, and separated it entirely from the rest of the country.

Marseilles, with the whole of Provence, became subject to the kings of France, but retained its privileges, and even when it acknowledged obedience to Henry IV, there was a clause in the treaty that the city should hold a sovereign court. Duvair, afterwards keeper of the seals, was created first president, and this arrangement subsisted for some time.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, when all the great commercial towns had independent governments, Marseilles was besieged by the Constable of Bourbon, and though left to its own resources, was not taken. One of the privileges of this prosperous city, a privilege, it is true, which every other town in Provence also enjoyed, but which Marseilles exercised in proportion to its importance and opulence, was to have, as its chief magistrate or consul, none but a man of noble birth and of a distinguished military family. This officer exercised great influence in times of political excitement.

John de Riqueti, son of Honorius I, was first consul of Marseilles in 1562. Religious troubles first broke

out in that year, so full of fearful events. Several towns were surprised and taken; and among the most important were Rouen and Orleans, and the king of Navarre, father of Henry IV, lost his life at the retaking of the former. The great Duke of Guise * was killed at the siege of the latter. Marseilles and Provence, tainted by a feeling of popular non-conformism, since the appearance of the sects of the Vaudois and Albigeois, had besides too great intercourse with Dauphiny to escape religious quarrels. The old hatred against the Dukes of Savoy, who had proved themselves so hostile to freedom in their immediate neighbourhood—a hatred which contributed fully as much as the orthodox faith, to the destruction of catholicism at Geneva and in Dauphiny, was deeply rooted in upper Provence, and soon extended to the inhabitants of the sea coast, especially those of Marseilles. Trade, which assumes the name of commerce in maritime towns, is naturally inclined towards republicanism. The lodge, the exchange, the bank—all those different assemblies of merchants, form a kind of democratic senate. The new religion was republican, and the presence of men of all nations in great sea-port towns is highly favourable to the dissemination of new doctrines. The attack made upon

* Francis of Lorrain, Duke of Guise, assassinated by Poltrot, before Orleans, February 15th, 1563.—*Editor.*

Marseilles, with unabating vigour, was therefore less likely to fail than if it had been directed against any other city.

John de Riqueti anticipated the danger. The precautionary measures which he induced the municipal authorities to take, the ostensible object of which was to keep the people in check, had the effect of creating an insurrectionary movement. This bold and decisive measure deprived the conspirators of all their advantages, by rousing the energy of the loyal citizens. The struggle was violent. John narrowly escaped with his life in endeavouring to save that of a nobleman named Cipierre, deputed by the chiefs of the innovators. While leading him to prison, at the head of his guards, the populace seized the unfortunate envoy and literally tore him to pieces. Riqueti succeeded at length in driving the conspirators from the town, and sent to the Count of Sommerive, chief of the catholics, a reinforcement of three hundred men, levied at his own expense. He supplied, from his own resources, convoys of corn with which he provisioned Marseilles.

This energetic conduct could not fail to draw upon him the hatred of the opposite party; and Captain Mouvans, one of the most enterprising of the Huguenot chiefs, destroyed the hospital which Peter Arrighetti had founded at Seyne, and also his tomb, on which was a statue of him and his coat of arms. This implacable enemy burned as many of our family records and titles

as he could lay hands upon. Fortunately these facts were certified by a judicial inquiry, which John had the precaution to institute on the spot, in 1584; for this man seemed to have had a powerful mind, and consummate prudence.

With regard to the pecuniary means with which he accomplished so many things, we have not sufficiently examined our family archives to be able to determine how he obtained them. There was at that time a company established at Marseilles to carry on the coral fishery, and it is probable that John de Riqueti had a share in it. Be this as it may, he occupies a very conspicuous place in the annals of Provence, and must have amassed great wealth; for in spite of the immense sacrifices he was called upon to make during the disturbances that took place whilst he was at the head of public affairs, he purchased the estates of Mirabeau, Beaumont, and Negreaux. These estates were divided among his numerous family, and were afterwards united in the hands of one person. He also purchased at Marseilles a beautiful bastide or country house, extensive gardens, and a great deal of other property, which was still in possession of our family a few years ago.

This faithful chief received, as a gift from Charles IX, the feudal rents attached to these estates. He had opened the gates of Marseilles to this monarch, as his nephew opened them to Henry IV, his son to Louis XIII, and his grandson to Louis XIV. But the Bishop

of Digne, to whom the king had also granted these rents, disputed the right of John de Riqueti, and instituted law proceedings which lasted a considerable time. We merely mention this fact on account of a singular reply which appears in John's defence, and proves that a lively and decided turn of mind has ever been the characteristic of our family. The Bishop, in one of the judicial documents, alleges that "John de Riqueti, a trader of Marseilles, has obtained the king's gift surreptitiously."

John replied: "With regard to the title of trader of Marseilles, which would be derogatory to no one, since our kings have even invited the nobles to become participators in the commerce of this city, I am, or was, a police merchant, in the same manner that the Bishop is a vender of holy water. It will be remembered that I was First Consul of Marseilles in 1562, and every one knows, that to fill this office a man must be of noble lineage."

These expressions certainly bear the stamp of originality, especially for those times, and considering that they emanated from one of the firmest adherents of catholicism *.

* John de Riqueti derived considerable emoluments from trade; all the nobles residing at Marseilles did the same, and there was perhaps not a single noble family in Provence, some branch of which was not settled in that opulent and populous city.

A distinction must be drawn, in this respect, between the

John's great age rendered him a witness of the principal events of those troubled times, and we find

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dependent maritime towns and those which were either metropolitan or independent cities. Bordeaux, Nantes, and other towns, were dependencies of their respective provinces, and their nobles did not engage in commerce, at least in their own name; but Venice, Genoa, and, although of less importance, Marseilles, which under Louis XIV was declared a free port, were looked upon as cities possessing no territory, and genealogists agree in stating that the nobles of these cities were merchants, as in other parts they were landed proprietors.

We mean simply to state an historical fact of some importance to the nobles of our provinces; but we are far from desirous of being considered as offering an excuse for an act derogatory from their rank. This would be both base and ungrateful. John de Riqueti was the most illustrious of our ancestors in France, and indeed one of the most illustrious of our house, some of whose members reached the highest dignities in the republic of Florence. God forbid that we should spurn the means to which we have owed an independent fortune! That fortune must of necessity have had an origin, and commerce without monopoly (and monopoly did not exist in those days, since it is always occasioned by the government, and the government at that period bore the mildest form,) in a country where the highest nobles had always been engaged in it, is unquestionably more honourable, as the means of acquiring riches, than the plunder allowed in war, or the price of servility at court. A man ought to be judged by the noble and generous use he makes of his wealth, not by the profession he followed whilst he was acquiring it.

The facts we have stated, and the high reputation which our family have enjoyed at Marseilles down to the present time, prove that John de Riqueti received from his ancestors, and transmitted to his posterity, the loftiest sentiments of honour and generosity.

Nostradamus, the author of a history of Provence, had acquired

him, in 1596, obliged to fly from his country, which he could no longer defend. His property was ravaged by

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great celebrity among the people, who at that time firmly believed in astrology. He states a fact which has led to many malicious reports, mentioned by my father in his works, in order to show his family how little confidence ought to be placed in anecdotes, or in traditions founded upon anecdotes. We transcribe the words of Nostradamus:—"Proceeding now to the most tyrannical extortions of money, they found that the Sieur of Mirabeau, of the family of the Riqueti, enjoying an honourable rank at Marseilles, and one of the richest merchants of that city, had absented himself to avoid paying the excessive sum of fourteen thousand crowns. This absence so enraged these petty tyrants, that they had the audacity to imprison the wife of this nobleman, an honourable lady, to carry off every thing in her house, and to place their scoundrels in it." This lady had, in 1564, married our fifth ancestor; her name was Margaret of Glandevès. She possessed no less courage than her husband; and in the history of Marseilles, it is recorded, that the tyrant Casaux having visited her in prison, thinking to prevail upon her to pay her ransom, she answered with as much prudence as spirit, despised his threats, reproached him with his robberies, and foretold his speedy punishment.

We may here remark, that in our family it has been the singular good fortune of our ancestors to have almost always obtained as wives women of superior merit. Their testamentary arrangements display a remarkably energetic female spirit, and a perfect accordance of opinion with their husbands.

Joan of Lenche, daughter-in-law of the Lady of Glandevès, was a woman of consummate prudence. The following popular story respecting her has been handed down by the tradition of the country.

Joan of Lenche, who married Honorius II in 1592, brought him as her dowry the house in the Place de Lenche, the finest residence in Marseilles. This square was at that period the only market-place of the town, which has since become so considerable.

the tyrant Casaux, that ferocious provost of Marseilles, who made himself master of the city, and was about to

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Joan, from the terrace of her house, could observe the servants making their purchases. She knew to what families they belonged, and observed which of them bought the dearest fish, "in order," as she stated, "not to lend her money to their masters." This anecdote is characteristic of the simplicity of the times.

Her daughter-in-law, Anne of Pontevès, was proud and overbearing, but possessed a lofty mind, and great firmness of character. There are several anecdotes of her extant; they remind me of one which an aunt of my grandmother's, Madame de Chateauneuf, who died in 1710, used to relate. This lady was so completely imbued with the proud spirit of those times, so heroic in comparison with ours, that she addressed the following lines to her nephew, whose undaunted courage and lofty temper will be shown in the course of this work:—

"Do you call yourselves men? Ye are nothing but degenerated men. In our days we carried pistols in our belts, and knew how to use them."

Such women would certainly exercise but little influence over the young fops of the present day, but they perpetuated high moral feeling and honour in their families.

This same Anne of Pontevès, being at the holy water fount, Madame de Foresta, of a highly respectable family of Provence, passed before her, in order to perform the usual ceremony of crossing herself with the water, when Anne pushed her aside, and striking her, said—

"Here, as well as at the army, the baggage goes behind."

Her adventure with the Chevalier de Griasque will be related presently, and will serve to illustrate female character in those days.

Elizabeth of Rochemore, daughter-in-law of Anne of Pontevès, was distinguished in this age of urbanity for her accomplishments. Madame de Sevigné, in speaking of her, says, "Is Madame de Beaumont as witty as ever?" She was, indeed, more than witty;

give it up to the Spaniards, when he was killed. The tyranny of Casaux ceased only on the surrender of

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she had all the virtues of her excellent mother. She governed her family during twelve years of widowhood with care and success.

My father, in a printed panegyric, celebrated the virtues of his respected mother, Frances of Castellane, wife of that John Anthony de Riqueti, concerning whom I am writing.

But to return to John. It was at Marseilles, and in commercial pursuits, that he realised his great wealth. It certainly could not have been at Seyne, at Digne, at Riez, nor at Moustier. Honorius I, father of John, was the first of the family who settled at Marseilles. John must have owed his fortunes to his own exertions; this is evident from the enormous sacrifices he made in his public career, and the great wealth he left behind him, sufficient to enrich three branches of his family. This immense fortune was divided among seven sons and two daughters, and the share of each was large enough to allow the junior branches to found the first house of Jesuits at Marseilles, the house of Sainte-Jeaume. John was thus the architect of his own fortune. Sticklers for genealogic purity will no doubt say, "but Nostradamus mentions John de Riqueti AS ONE OF THE RICHEST TRADERS OF MARSEILLES." No doubt, this must have been the fact, or he must have plundered. How is it otherwise possible to account for his public gifts, the magnitude of his undertakings, and the great influence he exercised? Besides, it has been shown that he was amerced in a sum of fourteen thousand crowns, by Casaux; and how enormous that sum was for those days, may be imagined from the remark of Nostradamus, who says:

"The tyrant exacted thirty sous entrance money from those whom he sent to prison, thirty sous on their discharge, and ten sous per diem for the gaoler, during the prisoner's detention;" and this the historian terms an "ENORMOUS VEXATION."

But although John de Riqueti had a considerable share in great commercial speculations, his answer to the Bishop of Digne plainly shows how impatiently he submitted to the appellation of "trader." And whether this title could in justice be applied to him, will be

Marseilles to the Duke of Guise, governor of the province, who took possession of it in the name of

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seen by the enquiry which he solicited from the parliament in 1584, and made at the place where his ancestors had resided. The very ravages committed by his enemies served to guide him: they had destroyed all the monuments from which we derived our fame. John caused these facts to be attested, and preserved the memory of his ancestors by this authentic and detailed enquiry, which has been admitted in all the proofs we have been called upon to make, and especially in those required by the chapter of Maubeuge. But why expatiate upon these events? Vanity of vanities! Have we not all of us the canopy of heaven above our heads?

It behoves the man whom Providence has destined to be the bearer of a great name to show himself worthy of it, in the same manner that a man, born without such advantage, ought to endeavour to establish one; in other words, it is our duty to preserve or merit the public gratitude, which sooner or later is the sure reward of actions performed for the benefit of society. Every man born in a superior rank of society, and who does nothing worthy of that rank, may be considered in the light of a bankrupt. There are duties attached to high station, the first of which is the preservation of that pre-eminence. The first of social duties is therefore the maintenance of family honour; opportunity and time do the rest. I cannot foresee the future fate of our house; its decline has been even more rapid than its rise: but this I know—it was ever great and noble; it sought at all times to maintain itself by honourable means, and founded its greatness upon public respect and esteem. Vanity is a common failing, but ours was not a mere weakness, especially in an age when money had not yet, by the purchase of titles, confounded all distinctions in the social hierarchy, and substituted for the evils attendant on hereditary nobility that singular and truly anti-social invention, the baseness of a nobility bought, sold, and bartered.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

Henry IV. This revolution was brought about by a conspiracy against the municipal tyranny which oppressed the city. The alarm was given at one of the gates, Casaux rushed to the spot, and Liberta, chief of the conspirators, stabbed him at the very moment he was admitting the Spaniards.

The Duke of Guise entered the town, and in the treaty with that prince, it was stipulated that Liberta should become provost, and Ogier de Riqueti, the nephew of John, first consul; which proves sufficiently that the party of our house supported Liberta in the insurrection. That intrepid citizen, who died without issue, was of a Corsican family, and had assumed the name of Liberta in consequence of an exploit of the same nature performed in his own country.

John de Riqueti, who maintained Marseilles under the sway of Charles IX, had the satisfaction of seeing his native city restored by his family to Henry IV. Thus, a long life, however eventful, always brings consolation to virtue. Times of discord and anarchy have one advantage among a thousand evils: men are formed and put to the test; numerous families become a positive good, if it be only as rallying points; the turbulent activity of youth finds useful employment; and old age is revered, consulted, believed, and obeyed.

Honorius II, the son of John de Riqueti, maintained, as his father had done, the royal authority at Marseilles. He obtained, in 1614, letters patent of

gentleman of the bed-chamber, a distinction as honourable in those days as it is valueless in our times. He was first consul in 1621, and was deputed at the head of the nobles to compliment Louis XIII, then besieging Montpellier. A considerable convoy of provisions which he brought with him in the name of the city, caused him to be received in the most distinguished manner, and the king took his son Thomas with him to court. *

This Honorius appears to have enjoyed great influence in Marseilles; his authority maintained the Jesuits against a powerful cabal. This order, though continually accused of political and secret vices, had rendered itself at all times sufficiently useful, to justify the zeal

* We will here add an anecdote which Mirabeau has omitted, but which is related by La Chenaye des Bois, in his "Dictionary of the Nobility," vol. xii. p. 121. "Two days after this audience with the king, the spies brought intelligence that the enemy were to make a grand sortie, under the command of M. d'Argencourt. This obliged all the troops, cavalry and infantry, composing the king's army, to be at their posts, in order to reinforce the lines, and repulse the sortie. Mirabeau failed not to be there with all the nobles that had accompanied him, and as they were not in sufficient number to form a squadron, the constable (Lesdiguières) who commanded and settled the posts, proposed to him to incorporate his followers with another troop of cavalry, to which he replied, 'that he had the honour to represent a city of too much importance to allow him to be attached to any other troops whatever; and he begged to have a post assigned to him where he might fight with all the nobles who had accompanied him.' The constable, pleased with the spirited reply, readily acceded to his request."—*Editor.*

of its adherents, among whom it was natural that the founders of the house should place themselves. Honorius died of apoplexy, in 1622. It is a remarkable fact, that he is the only one of the family after whose death an inventory was found, a proof of the praiseworthy union which cemented their domestic confidence.

Thomas, the son of Honorius II, was, as we have just stated, left at court. He married, early in life, a lady of a high and proud family, at least if we may judge from this expression used upon the occasion: "Magnificent Lord Pompey of Pontevès and de Buous, and Magnificent Lady Margaret de la Baume of Suze." These were the father and mother in law of Thomas. He became his own master at a very early age, made the campaigns in Italy, and lived in great splendour. He was the first who introduced liveries * at Marseilles, where he lived in a splendid and expensive style. At his death his affairs were found in a very deranged state. This was the first and necessary consequence of the notions he imbibed during a life spent at court. He nevertheless rendered some essential services to his family by the manner in which he brought up and settled his numerous children, consisting of six sons and three daughters. His two eldest sons were educated at Paris,

* His liveries were red. My great grandmother has heard it stated by old persons, that the people used to call as the servants passed, "Come and see the Marquis of Mirabeau's Swiss soldiers." —*Note by Mirabeau.*

and the four youngest became knights of Malta during their minority *.

The troubles which broke out during the regency of Anne of Austria, agitated Marseilles as well as the rest of the kingdom. Our family embraced the royal cause. Thomas, and his son Honorius, were both wounded during a tumult at the town-house. Shortly after these events, the young king made his entry at Marseilles, and ordered the erection of a citadel, now called Fort St. Nicolas. During his sojourn in the town, he occupied our house in the Place Lenche, with the Queen-Mother and Cardinal Mazarin. As it was resolved that Marseilles should henceforward be reduced to the condition of a purely commercial city, the consulate was abolished, and the office of alderman established. It was also ordered that the first alderman should always be chosen from the body of traders. This change in the constitution was the cause of the removal of our family, and of nearly all the nobles, from Marseilles. The king, during his stay, granted his letters patent, erecting the estate of Mirabeau into a marquisate; but the formalities of registering not being complied with, it was only twenty-five

* We have not found in the archives of our family any proofs made in that order anterior to those furnished by Francis de Riqueti, the eldest of these four knights; nor is this to be wondered at, since it was at the chapter general of 1583 that the priors of Malta first received orders to keep archives, and this regulation did not take effect before the chapter general of 1631.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

years after that the final ceremony took place under our great-grandfather Honorius III.

This Honorius III was a man of great talents. Firm, sagacious, and able, he was called the Solomon of the country. He was born in 1622, and his father dying in 1672, he became, when fifty years of age, the chief of the house. He found the family property heavily encumbered with large engagements, and charged with the payment of numerous portions to brothers, all of whom were of hasty tempers, and men of extraordinary character. Honorius III retired with his family to Mirabeau, where he spent several years, living with the strictest economy. Fortunately for him, he had the consolation of study, the best support in adversity, offering not only great enjoyments, but an occupation worthy of the nature and destiny of man. Honorius found his chief delight in the study of Tacitus, whose precepts no doubt taught him to become a good citizen. He had borne arms in Italy, in Catalonia, at the raising of the siege of Turin, at the sieges of Collioure and Perpignan, at the battle of Lerida, at the taking of the towns of Villeneuve, Ast, and Trin, and had been wounded several times.

Even at this period, public services had no longer anything of that which I should term filial and pious. Badly constituted monarchies tend to make disaffected subjects. In absolute governments, the higher orders only can bear arms, or become servile courtiers. The city of

Marseilles, in its subjugated state, no longer offered any opening for public services. Provence had a peculiar constitution, and our ancestors, though engaged in the administration of Marseilles, had occupied themselves with the affairs of the different bodies composing our municipal corps. Honorius II, the grandfather of Honorius III, was several times syndic of the nobles. This latter was at Mirabeau, living in that close retirement which the welfare of his family imperiously demanded, when, in 1678, he was elected first procurator of the province. He left his retreat, and appeared at the head of his province in a very becoming manner. His wife was highly accomplished, and had great dignity of manner. They came to reside at the town-house of Aix with a considerable retinue. Their popular behaviour delighted the middle classes, and the state in which they lived commanded respect. It is easily conceived that a man of such talents did not, at the age of fifty-six, consider that these brilliant appearances were to be kept up merely for show. His prudence and firmness were to be put to many trials, and indeed these distinctive qualities were already known. At an assembly of the nobles, M. Delamolle, a counsellor in Parlement, having insulted the Marquis of Oraison, then one of the notables of the province, Honorius de Riqueti, though known for his moderation, said unhesitatingly that " all the nobles of the long robe ought to be driven away;" and lifting up his cane, would have administered

justice after the fashion of the times, if M. de Cormis had not prevented the blow by placing himself before Honorius. This anecdote became generally known, and after that time no person appeared robed at the assemblies of the nobles.

A man of this stamp, placed at the head of affairs, necessarily became their chief director. Times and circumstances demanded a powerful and sure arm. This was the most brilliant period of the reign of Louis XIV, if we are to judge by the splendour of his court, the display of a large army and a numerous fleet, and the prodigious efforts which this monarch made. But it was in reality the period when the greatest discontent reigned throughout the provinces. The system of Colbert, whose plan was to tax every thing, destroy every privilege, every conventional usage and long-established custom, made the whole kingdom, and more particularly the maritime provinces, swarm with fiscal agents, despotically protected. Such functionaries are objects of horror and detestation in every country in the world. During the long reign of Louis XIV, which attacked and annihilated old customs, the fiscal system took deep root; but it was impatiently tolerated by the generations that had tasted of liberty and had lived in troubled times. The inhabitants of Provence, ever tyrannised over, have never been patient; when discontented and oppressed, they only waited for an opportunity to exterminate the

custom-house and tax agents, and those whom they have always termed "partisans." A favourable opportunity offered, as they thought: they were informed that the Duke of Savoy had entered Dauphiny and was proceeding to Provence. A rising immediately took place in the province, and disturbances broke out in the town of Aix. Honorius de Riqueti ran to the Intendant, Rouillé de Meillan—

"Fly, Sir," said he, "fly instantly, and I will be answerable to the king for the city and province. In an hour, it will be, perhaps, too late; if once the people commit a crime, there will no longer be any possibility of keeping them within bounds."

The intendant yielded to these representations and escaped over the roofs of the houses. The numerous agents of the excise disappeared, and the procurators of the province assumed the reigns of government.

The chief then courageously demanded of the mutineers "whether they wished to become subjects of the Duke of Savoy?" The inhabitants of Provence entertained a deep hatred to this troublesome neighbour, who always aimed at extending his dominions. This question, repeated among the people, struck them with dismay, and rendered them docile. The ambitious progress of the Duke of Savoy being arrested by the small-pox, with which that prince was attacked, he did not enter Provence, where, in the event of such invasion, all the provosts had received orders to lay waste

their territory, and yield to the enemy's soldiers nothing but a desert without provisions. For this the governor of the province promised the inhabitants an adequate indemnity.

Things were in this state when the French troops made their appearance. The regiment of Hamilton had received directions to chastise the city of Aix. The commander found the gates closed, but the procurators went out to receive him. The Count of Hamilton, ignorant of the constitution of the county, did not form a very high opinion of these gentlemen; for the military had already learned to look down upon the municipal authorities. He asked Honorius de Riqueti, in a haughty tone, by what right he had closed the gates of the town against the king's troops.

"Young man," replied the first procurator, "lower your tone, I beg; and recollect that with a single sign I could bring out twenty thousand men who would answer for me. Your soldiers shall enter, but only by my orders. As for yourself, my house shall be your quarters, and in the course of a couple of hours, you shall inform me to which of us two you think the tone of command you have assumed, most properly belongs."

The three battalions were conducted to the great square, through streets lined with people. Billets were then distributed, and the arms of each company placed at the quarters of its captain. These officers were too well provided for to become troublesome. The colours

were carried to the town-house, where the Count of Hamilton perceiving the high respect which Riqueti universally inspired, became a devoted courtier to the Marchioness of Mirabeau. His regiment was everywhere perfectly well received, and things passed off peaceably.

At the end of the year, the first procurator of the province proposed to the Provincial Assembly, which supplies the place of the States, not to deliberate upon any levies for that year, on account of the extraordinary expenditure incurred for the troops, and the succours due to the mountain provostships. Fortunately, Cardinal Grimaldi, Archbishop of Aix, a benevolent and worthy prelate residing in the province, to which he was particularly attached, opposed nothing that could be conducive to its interests. The proposal was agreed to with firmness, but without acclamations. Honorius returned the insignia of his office more honoured than he had received them, and being required to give an account of his conduct, repaired to court and succeeded in obtaining the king's approbation of all his actions.

Towards the close of his life he rendered another important service to the city of Marseilles. In 1686, the inhabitants having suffered from various grievances, deputed him to lay their claims before the king. Riqueti proceeded to court, where being received in an unbecoming manner by the young and haughty de Seignelai, he said to him,—

"I see, Sir, that it is better to treat directly with the king than with his servants. I shall therefore go to his majesty."

At that time such a thing was possible; this is not the case now, and will never, perhaps, be so again in France. M. de Seignelai was alarmed, called back the negociator whom courtly impertinence could not abash, and gave a favourable answer to Riqueti's application. Honorius then returned to his native city, where he died at the close of 1687, at the age of sixty-five years, universally beloved and respected *.

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* Honorius intended to have written his memoirs.

"I have in my possession a manuscript in the hand-writing of our respected grandfather, which contains nothing more than the dates of successive events, in notes so short that I can make no use of them. All that I can make out is, that he was preparing a history of the late domestic troubles at Marseilles, in which the party of our house took so conspicuous as share, since it was that party which opened the gates to the king, as our grandfather's grandfather had done to Louis XIII, and his great grandfather to Charles IX. He was so much an eye witness of these events, that he was wounded at the town-house, as also was his father, on the same day. A history of this decription, written by the wisest man of his time (for such was his reputation), a man whose only books, after those of Holy Writ, were Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, and some other historians—a man also of weight and authority, entirely broken in to public business, would no doubt have been extremely valuable, notwithstanding the apparently small importance of the subject, when compared with that of other histories. But it is the pen which gives the merit to an historical work, not the extent of the subject. The conspiracy of Venice, by the Abbé de St. Real, and that of Giovanni di Fiesco, by Cardinal de Retz, will both of them always be considered master-pieces. I am therefore sorry that the work in question did not appear, as it

Before I mention John Anthony, the son of Honorius III, and the principal subject of these memoirs, I shall say a few words respecting his uncles, the brothers of Honorius.

Of five brothers, four of whom outlived him, Francis was the first and only one of the family ever intended for holy orders. Wild, dissipated, and thirsting for independence, he would never adopt any fixed pursuit. His brother, a captain in the guards, of whom I shall speak hereafter, obtained for him, during the time he was in favour, the reversion of the bishopric of Digne, and informed him at the same time that the only thing required of him would be to spend three months at the ecclesiastical seminary, to prepare himself for holy orders. He coolly replied, "that if fate destined him to wear the mitre, it must fall perpendicularly

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would have conferred celebrity upon my grandfather, and enriched literature. Take care that your descendants do not some day complain thus of your own memoirs, which you always defer to a more convenient opportunity. I know that time is necessary; but a man like you is always master of his mind, so that you can take advantage of any quarter of an hour to employ in matters very foreign to those you are about. I am coming to this point; and it is easy for you to reach it in a single leap. Scipio had greater occupation than you. I think you must admit this: for the life of a private individual, in a republic, is more complicated than that of a man in office under a monarchy. Nevertheless, he guided Polybius, wrote comedies for Terence, and said that he was never more occupied than when he had nothing to do."—(Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 9th, 1754.)—*Editor.*

upon his head, during his studies at Marseilles, otherwise he should decline it." This system did not, as may be supposed, lead him on to fortune; and he remained at his own home, to the ruin of which he mainly contributed.

The second of the five brothers of Honorius III, named also Francis de Riqueti, was a knight of Malta, and distinguished himself in his youth by an act of daring intrepidity. His mother, Anne of Ponteves de Buous, was one day outrageously insulted by the chevalier de Griasque, a well known bully.

"Scoundrel!" she exclaimed, placing the muzzle of a pistol to his head, "I would blow your brains out, but that I have children who will avenge me in a more honourable manner."

This act of violence produced a collision between the two parties to which each belonged, and the gates of the city were closed. A ship, which at this moment set sail for Malta, carried with it the news of the quarrel. Francis, who had not yet attained his seventeenth year, and was sowing his wild oats, immediately proceeded to Marseilles, and without stopping to call on his mother, went directly to the chevalier de Griasque, who on accepting his challenge, said to his friends—

"I am going to bleed a chicken."

They repaired together to a garden, and this chicken, having locked the doors, threw the keys over the wall, and slew the boasting chevalier.

This Francis de Riqueti was the only one of his family undistinguished by talent or vivacity; but, on the other hand, he was quick at resenting any personal attack, even when merely a youth. In the heat of a discussion, he struck the general of the galleys, the nephew of the grand master of the order, and jumping overboard, swam to a ship which, fortunately for him, was at that very moment setting sail. He was then degraded, and though afterwards restored to the order, he lost his seniority, and consequently never took the vows, but was always known as the commander Mirabeau. He became captain of the galleys of France, and afterwards major and inspector of that corps, and retained the place of inspector even beyond the usual term, thanks to his eccentricity. Having learned that M. de la Jouquière, who did not belong to the corps, had been appointed inspector of the galleys, Francis, providing himself with a cane of immense dimensions, appeared constantly in public with this weapon shouldered as a musket, and when asked the reason of this singular proceeding, he replied—

"It is because I expect my superior officer at parade."

M. de la Jouquèire did not think fit to expose himself to the striking arguments of this unmannerly logician, and Francis de Riqueti continued to fulfil the duties of inspector.

This singular man was extremely economical, and

from the great favour he seemed to be conferring when he granted the merest trifle, he passed for being very avaricious. He had laid by the greatest part of his pay, and had probably realised some property in his piratical excursions, in which the Maltese youth of those days not unfrequently indulged. He lived with his sister, Madame de Puget*, in a house they had jointly built, her share of which she bequeathed to him at her death. Honorius III was also dead, and his widow found means to conciliate for her children the good graces of the rough-tempered Francis. Every year she brought him the receipt for her pension, which he however took care not to pay, his real motive being to increase his inheritance for the benefit of his nephews. Our grandfather, John Anthony, of whom we shall presently speak, used jestingly to accuse himself of having, in the following manner, involuntarily inveigled Francis to leave him his fortune. During one of the brief sojourns which his duty allowed him to make at Marseilles, he found his uncle dangerously ill, and obliged to undergo an operation. It was successful, and Francis felt much relieved. The nephew, drawing four louis from his purse, presented them to the surgeon. The old gentleman, economical, and a Provençal in the fullest sense of the word, was so surprised at this generosity, that he exclaimed:

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* Joan de Riqueti, married April 11th, 1643, to Francis de Clapius, Lord of Pujet.—*Editor.*

" That child indeed loves me; no other shall have my fortune;" and at his death he made him his heir.

The third brother of Honorius de Riqueti, Thomas Albert, was a man of great talent, but of fiery temper. He was a knight of Malta, and a captain in the navy. In the latter capacity, he cruised with his brother Francis against the Spaniards, with whom France was at war, hoisting the Maltese flag whenever he fell in with a Turkish vessel. A prosecution ensued against him, as also against Captains Forbin and Clapiers, who pursued the same course, mingling with it a little piracy. A copy of the proceedings is in the archives at Mirabeau.

This circumstance did not cool Thomas Albert's ardour for adventures. It was he who conducted to the castle of Mirabeau the wife of the constable de Colonne, and her sister, the beautiful duchess of Mazarin, when they fled from their homes, and went about the country like two heroines of romance. "*Poi fuimo a Mirabello*" (we then went to the château of Mirabeau) says Madame de Mazarin, in her Memoirs; but she does not say what they did there. The tradition of the country relates that the persons whom her husband sent in pursuit of her, and who were bearers of the king's order, at a period when passive obedience was not altogether a law, happened to arrive on a Saturday evening, at the hour of the Angelus, when it was customary to ring all the church bells. They were so startled at the wildness of the scene, the rocks, the mountains, the

embattled towers, the reputation of the masters of the castle, and what appeared to them the sounding of the alarm bell, that they crossed themselves, and fled precipitately to their boats, leaving their mission unaccomplished. It was, however, indispensable that the fugitives should quit the kingdom, and the frontiers were guarded. The Chevalier de Beaumont (such was the title borne by Thomas Albert de Riqueti), aided by his brothers and friends, found no other expedient than that of breaking the chain of the port of Marseilles. A criminal prosecution was the consequence of this action, but the Chevalier got off with flying colours. He was afterwards appointed Grand Prior of Toulouse*, of which office however he did not take possession, on account of his death, occasioned by the rupture of a blood-vessel, whilst breaking in a horse. This horse, which he bequeathed to his family, was the only gift they ever received from him†.

* In 1690 he obtained this appointment, because La Hilière Polastron, grand commander, did not take it, as he wished to retain his own office, which enabled him the better to annoy the grand master, whom he mortally hated.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

† There is a singular anecdote concerning this horse, which may give an idea of the military vigour of the Marquis of Mirabeau, and show the difference between the gymnastics of those days and those of our own times. This vicious horse was sent to our grandfather, John Anthony, then at Arles: the beast was brought with blinkers and heel-ropes. The horse having rested, my grandfather ordered it to be taken, saddled and bridled, to the course outside the town. Having sprung upon the saddle, the grooms took off the ropes and

Louis de Riqueti, the youngest of the five brothers, died at Malta, aged only nineteen years. He had there been engaged in piratical excursions against the Turks; a very common practice in those days. Such was the school in which Tourville and other celebrated naval commanders were formed.

The fourth brother, Bruno, whom I have reserved for the last in this biographical sketch, was the most singular character of them all, and rendered himself the most conspicuous. He survived all his brothers, became a knight of Malta, and his adventures were as extraordinary as they were numerous.

Towards the close of his life he lived very retired. As a man of taste, he admired the works of Port Royal, but hated the Jesuits, who enjoyed such high favour under Louis XIV. He seemed for mere amusement, to indulge in his sarcastic turn of

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the blinkers. The animal felt its master, trembled, became alarmed, and prepared for a plunge. On one side were the city walls, on the other the Crapone canal, as broad, at least in this place, as the canal of Languedoc. The vigorous and enraged animal sprang forward and cleared the canal. More than fifty years after the place was shown, and the fact related as a prodigy. Neither the horse nor his rider fell. There was a ploughed field on the other side. In vain did the horse try to bite, rear, and roll upon the ground. The animal was of elegant form, and the excellent rider of a height which gave him immense command, and possessed of strength which overcame that of the beast, forced the latter to moderate its violence, walk through the furrows, and take every sort of pace. The horse soon became obedient, and as renowned for its good qualities as for its beauty.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

mind; it was therefore difficult to determine the objects of his hatred, or of his predilection. But he appeared to pride himself upon his dislike to the order of Loyola, and asserted that his aversion commenced from the time when, having run away from home, he was taken by two of these reverend fathers, and conducted by them from Avignon to Paris, as if he had been their servant. Whether this anecdote be founded in truth or not, the clever and spirited youth soon made himself known. He was introduced at Madame de Venelle's, whose house was the ready asylum of every Provençal. This lady had been governess of Cardinal Mazarin's nieces. The king, scarcely emerged from boyhood, had found her invulnerable against the attacks of his youthful gallantry, and he conceived great esteem for her on account of that very severity, for which, at a later period, Madame de Navailles incurred his displeasure. Madame de Venelle was appointed under-governess to the royal children of France, and became the patroness of every native of Provence.

Bruno de Riqueti was presented at court under the title of the Chevalier de Villebonne, the name he bore in the family. Lively, active, and brave, of the same age as the king, he soon gained the friendship of the young monarch, who admitted him as a companion in all his exercises, and presented him with an ensigncy in his guards. I have heard it related by old men who had themselves heard it from their seniors in age, that

he surpassed his youthful master in the exercise of leaping, and, like a true Provençal, would never listen to the courtly advice of those who wished him to humour the king, by knocking down at least one hat from a heap, placed upon a stick, which the young monarch could never succeed in clearing. Had this been his only failing, he might have run a brilliant career, for he was distinguished by great and dazzling qualities,—the most brilliant valour, great natural talents, an athletic frame, and a daring spirit, which not unfrequently carried him beyond the bounds of propriety, but which, even during this reign, as well as at other periods, was often attended with success. He possessed the art of a commander, and indeed every military accomplishment. These personal endowments were more than sufficient to lead him to the pinnacle of fame and fortune; but he could not curb his unruly temper, and his actions were sometimes those of a madman. A lofty spirit is no doubt requisite, but his carried him always too far.

When he entered the guards, that corps, open to the middle classes of Paris, was not much sought after by the military nobles. The Duke of Lafeuillade, one of the king's favourites, was colonel of the regiment, which he was desirous of placing upon a higher footing, and he felt honoured in having under his command such a man as the Count of Mirabeau, a title which Bruno had assumed. Bruno married Catherine Forest, the

lady of Vaugien, a rich widow, who brought him the beautiful estate of Vaugien. He had always been a great favourite with the fair sex, who, however, feared him, and twice he narrowly escaped being poisoned. He rose in his regiment without purchase; but in consequence of disputes at court, in which some ladies of the highest rank were implicated, he was sent from his corp to command detachments at Lille and at Nancy, and was kept at these places for a considerable time. At Nancy, he allowed his beard and nails to grow to a great length, as a sign of mourning for the disgrace into which he had fallen. The king, who entertained a lively friendship for him, and over whom he had acquired, in his peculiar way, a species of ascendency, at last forgave him all his follies. The number and nature of those which have been related to me surpass all belief. I will only mention what occurred one day at Versailles. Having pursued with blows one of the servants of the palace, termed "blue men," (valets wearing embroidery, who waited in the apartments at the palace) to the very door of the king's closet, his majesty ordered the Duke of Lafeuillade to put Mirabeau under arrest. When the king's order was intimated to the Count, he refused to obey it, saying, that he would not be punished for having chastised an insolent valet; that he would go to the king's dinner, and the monarch could, if he pleased, give him the order himself. He accordingly appeared at the royal

table, and the king enquired of the duke of Lafeuillade why his command had not been obeyed. Upon the duke stating the fact we have related, the king, whose greatness of mind was as conspicuous as his goodness, said:—

"We have always known him to be a thoughtless, hair-brained fellow, therefore we must not ruin him!"*

The Count's impetuosity and cynical candour, however, were not altogether without dignity. The following characteristic anecdote has been preserved by M. Thomas in his essay on eulogies. At the inauguration of the pedestrian statue of the Place des Victoires, that masterpiece of adulation by the Duke of Lafeuillade, and that monument, at the same time, of the king's weakness for every thing that evinced splendour, the Count of Mirabeau, crossing the Pont Neuf at the head of the guards, presented arms before the statue of Henry IV, exclaiming:—

"My friends, let us salute this one—he is fully as good as the other."

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* During his campaigns he lost his wife, and the marriage settlement, by which she had conferred upon him the estate of Vaugien, being deficient in a certain formality, through the rascality of a lawyer who was in connivance with her family, he lost the property. He represented to the king that he had been ruined in his Majesty's service. The formality alluded to was new; the king therefore ordered a negociation to be set on foot with the family, who ultimately agreed to grant the Count a life annuity of 8,000 livres.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

The different offices he held, and several tontines in which he was interested, made him very wealthy at the close of his life. His second wife was Anne of Boulainvilliers, a lady of gentle lineage, and highly cultivated understanding, but who brought him no fortune. The motive that determined his choice partook of the same character of singularity which pervaded all his actions.

The conversation turned, one day at a party, upon the ladies of honour of Madame (the king's sister). The Count of Mirabeau, whose satirical wit was an inexhaustible mine of anecdote, amused the company with stories upon this fertile subject. A lady present, who was a stranger to him, contradicted him, but with great mildness, and in a manner that tended to enhance the conversational talents of the Count. The ladies of Maubeuge, a country frequently occupied by the military, and a resort of the fashionables of the day, were next the objects of Bruno's attacks. The lady defended them against their witty adversary, but always in a temperate and obliging manner. The fair apologist having at length withdrawn, Mirabeau learnt that the person with whom he had been arguing, was no other than Mademoiselle de Boulainvilliers, a canoness of Maubeuge, and formerly lady of honour to Madame. Surprised and confused, he vowed he would offer his hand to this gifted young lady, and he kept his word.

After a long military career, during which he commanded the guards for a considerable time, he at length got tired of the service, in consequence of a severe wound he received at the battle of St. Denis, where his regiment particularly distinguished itself.

"I have had enough of it," he exclaimed, "this shall be my last."

Notwithstanding this resolution, he remained fourteen years longer in the army, always distinguishing himself by his bravery and loyalty. He was promoted to the government of Quesnoi, the titular governor of which was supposed to be dead; but such not being the case, Mirabeau retired from the service without the usual promotion. He, however, commanded universal respect, for, notwithstanding his eccentricities of temper, his superior qualities had gained him many friends. Marshal de Villars was one day asked, how it was possible that so sensible a man as he was could be on terms of friendship with so extraordinary a character.

"That madman," he replied, "possesses qualities rarely found among wise men."

He lived to the age of ninety-three, having retired to Provins, a small town, in the neighbourhood of which he had purchased an estate. He left an only daughter, who married the Marquis of St. Micaud, a nobleman of Burgundy, at that time colonel of the regiment of Bourbon. The pride, the fiery temper,

and the eccentricities of this singular but brilliant man, formed a bad example for my grandfather, naturally dazzled by the superior qualities of a person who was in a manner his patron and mentor. My grandfather served at first in the Mousquetaires, and was, therefore, under the guidance of the Count of Mirabeau. Madame d'Estoublon, my grandfather's sister, a very superior woman in every respect, and who sincerely loved him, used to say of her uncle, with reference to her brother—

" That Parisian madman has spoiled him."

Having spoken successively of the brothers of Honorius III, I have now only to talk of his son, and their nephew, John Anthony, our grandfather, who henceforward will be the sole object of these memoirs.

John Anthony de Riqueti was born on the 29th of September, 1666. His elder brother having died in minority, he became chief of the family at the early age of twenty-one.

His father, Honorius III, had been carefully educated at Paris, but did not follow the same plan for his sons. His college studies, he said, had not been productive of any benefit to him; and that was, in his opinion, a sufficient reason for adhering to the prejudices of the times, when manly exercises alone were considered the proper education for young nobles, and an intercourse with society the best finishing school. John Anthony and his brother Hannibal consequently spent their

youth at Mirabeau, under the care of an excellent father, and of a mother in every respect worthy of him; but they had extraordinary examples before their eyes in the conduct of their uncles.

It is not without some difficulty that I can succeed in giving a methodical account of my grandfather's life. I have heard my father, and several of his contemporaries say, that he was not a man to be troubled with questions. His reputation, his services, his commanding figure, his rapid eloquence, his haughty demeanour, his virtues, and even his defects, inspired all around him with a certain awe. In spite of the urbanity of his manner, his quick and touchy temper made him feared. It was impossible to become familiar with him; even his children dared not, in his presence, yield to the impulse of filial affection*.

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* Some opinion may be formed of him from the following extract taken from the unpublished memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"The stately manners of those days, since that period very much altered, will now appear very singular, when all is external, artificial, and affected, and a pretended sensibility has assumed the place of reasonable, solid, and judicious affection. I never had the honour of touching the flesh of this respectable man, of this excellent father, but whose innate dignity kept out of sight that kindness which was always felt without letting it appear externally. He made me leave my birth-place very abruptly at the end of 1729, on receiving the news of some review. I remember, that as I was about to begin my journey early in the morning, I

All that I have been able to learn respecting his early youth, is, that he served in the Mousquetaires

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was told that he was up, and I went to his room. As the carriage had not yet arrived, for fear he should become impatient, he made me continue the reading of a book on devotion, which a servant was reading to him when I entered. The moment the vehicle arrived, he suddenly stopped me—

" 'Here is the carriage, child,' said he, 'adieu! be prudent, if you would be happy:' and I left him as I should have done on any other day.

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" It was in 1729, whilst I was still a child, that I quitted my father's house. I returned, for the first time, to make an outfit, in 1733, after the siege of Kell, during the first war of Louis XV. I then saw very little of him. I recollect, that the day after my arrival, as he went very early to mass, he was gone before I could pay my duty to him. I met him on the course at Aix, as he was returning. I had on my best regimentals.

" 'Sir,' said he, 'when a man appears before any one to whom he owes respect, he leaves off his corporal's coat, which is no where in place but at the head of soldiers. Go, Sir, and take off that coat.'

" Neither my brothers nor I ever had regular conversations with my father. He took care, I think, to say good things in our presence, at least as much as in the presence of others; but he gave us few, if any, direct lessons. This was not necessary to inculcate his principles; for if it be true that *initium sapientiæ timor Domini*, he had inspired us with all that was necessary to make us good. And candidly speaking, if he had not been feared by his children, they would have enjoyed an especial privilege, for he was feared by every body else. I well remember that when at the academy, two hundred leagues distant from him, the thought of him alone made me tremble for the consequences of any youthful pranks likely to make a noise. And as, for want of an arm, he could not write, but made my mother write for him, I was so accustomed to dread his letters, that not only at this period, but forty years subsequently, I could

before the age of eighteen *, since he was in that corps at the siege of Luxemburg, undertaken at a period of profound peace, by order of the incendiary Louvois.

Nature had been singularly lavish in her gifts to this handsome young man. Tall, and remarkably well formed, his fine soldier-like countenance evinced the fire of his soul. Generous even to a fault, proud but humane, obliging, urbane, and frank, he was formed to attract general admiration, and his personal dignity justified it through life. The young men of that period were refractory and turbulent. The corps of the Mousquetaires, though the first military step of the

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never open a letter from my mother without a throbbing of the heart."—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* I have heard it related, that one day at a review, he was so cruelly pinched by new shoes, that he cut one of them with a razor; but no sooner had he partially liberated the captive foot than the red stocking formed a curious contrast with the leather. The king was very particular when he reviewed the troops. The young Mousquetaire got some ink, and thinking to blacken his stocking, produced only a deep blood colour. The king having arrived, my grandfather in confusion placed the heel of his right foot upon the toe of his left. Louis XIV. attentive to every thing, stopped, with all his retinue, and said:—

" Mousquetaire, you do not stand well under arms."

My grandfather was therefore obliged to place his feet properly, and the defect of the shoe became visible. The king's attendants began to laugh as loudly as the majesty of their master permitted. How many thus show their weakness by the very precautions they take to hide it!—*Note by Mirabeau.*

young nobles, and commanded by men of merit, under the immediate inspection of Louis XIV, who showed a great predilection for this regiment, formed nevertheless a very bad school, as a body composed entirely of young men must always be, more or less. This method of assembling young men together, and freeing them from all family restraint, is destructive of every principle of decorum, and is, in my opinion, the surest way of destroying civilization, which is the result of the natural progress of events, and of the combinations of powerful and lofty minds. My grandfather passed the ordeal without a taint. He well knew the danger, and has been frequently heard to say—

"I would rather strangle my children than place them in the Mousquetaires."

He was in his youth of a lively turn, and had great vivacity of temper; but he was proof against the usual seductions of gaming, wine, and gallantry. At this period, supper parties consisted of men only, and although he could bear the effect of wine, it did not agree with his constitution. He never indulged, even during his convivial moments, in anything beyond an innocent frolic, to which indeed his natural flow of spirits sufficiently disposed him, without any other means of excitement.

I have heard many singular anecdotes of him, but they were always of a lively and agreeable turn, never indicative of unkind feelings. Hearsay anecdotes

are always exaggerated, and as this extraordinary man became more daring and original as he grew older, the stories related of him and of his uncles made such an impression, that by the time my father entered society, our family had acquired as much celebrity for bold eccentricities, as Roquelaure had gained notoriety for his witticisms, with this difference, that the dignified manners of the Riqueti not only won esteem, but commanded respect.

I have said that Honorius III died in 1687. He left all his property to his widow, on condition she disposed of it in favour of the child whom she should deem the most deserving. And at the same time he directed a general entail of the property. His high-minded widow proved herself worthy of the trust. Without availing herself of the advantages which the will gave her, she allowed things to take their natural course; and while she lived with the strictest economy, her eldest son, whose dignified bearing gave an air of greatness to all his actions, was enabled to appear at Paris, and in his corps, in a manner suitable to his rank.

His younger brother, Hannibal, a knight of Malta, was of a mild and steady disposition. He served on board the galleys, at that time a very distinguished service. The presents of his uncles and aunts gave him a handsome competency, and he was supposed to be very rich, because he joined to the greatest possible

order, an inexhaustible fund of generosity. He lived in the best harmony with his impetuous brother, and the family enjoyed the greatest prosperity.

My grandfather served four years in the Mousquetaires. In 1689, the year in which his father died, the war broke out and lasted till the close of the seventeenth century. At the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678, the king had disbanded the whole of the cavalry, with the exception only of one company in each regiment, which preserved the regimental colours. It became, therefore, necessary to obtain men and horses, and commissions for levying companies of cavalry were granted to young men of noble families. My grandfather's company was incorporated with the regiment of Besons, and as the choice of colonels was dictated by birth and merit, seven of his friends afterwards obtained the command of regiments in the same year that he did. He levied his company in Provence. Requiring forty men, he chose them from among eighty of the farmers on his own estates, who voluntarily offered themselves; and of those forty, eleven were afterwards promoted to the rank of officers. Whether this was owing to a greater love of military glory then prevalent in France, or whether the people were less poor, or the youth of those days less eager for lucrative but sedentary employment, I am unable to determine, but I am inclined to think that these three causes contributed to produce this military feeling.

Louis XIV was still in the meridian of his glory.

Scarcely turned of fifty, he had already renounced the pursuits of pleasure and gallantry; but he was still attached to splendour and magnificence, which, united to the decorum of age, of which he was always a strict observer, gave an air of dignified majesty to everything that surrounded him. Fond of pomp and parade, he delighted to see the nobility and military lavish their fortunes in brilliant equipages, liveries, plumes, and courtly show. No man ever acquired, like him, the art of combining dignity with grace, ostentation with simplicity; and the nation, eager for royal applause, prone to imitation, changeable in their tastes and habits, sacrificed everything to gaudy ostentation. When the province of Lorraine was conquered, in 1733, the old men of that country, who had seen the French of the preceding century, said that they did not recognise them in their descendants.

"Formerly," they said, "the avenues of the theatres were crowded with brilliant equipages, horses, servants in splendid liveries, and trumpeters. You are nothing but paltry privates, in comparison with those gay and gallant knights."

Thus, an age of magnificence ruins succeeding ages. But it must be admitted that personal dignity is the most noble of refinements, and we are now still more deficient in those qualities than in pecuniary resources.

M. Besons, an officer of great talents and experience, who held the rank of brigadier, commanded the regiment

which my grandfather was to join with his youthful companions, all superbly attired in the most brilliant military costumes, mounted upon the finest horses gaily caparisoned, and who found, as their companions in arms, a handful of sturdy veterans. The commanding officer entertained the most perfect indifference for elegance of manners. The second in command was an old officer of the name of Bondy, of a still more crabbed temper, who had been in the Swedish service, and was attached to all the martinet forms of the good old school. The plainness of his dress, his huge red perriwig surmounted with an immense beaver hat, and his habitual dryness both of speech and manner, made him appear, in the eyes of the gay young officers, a living automaton, and they resolved to have no other intercourse with him but that which the good of the service strictly enjoined. They waited upon him, once a-week, in the morning; these visits were short, and few words passed. No report was made, for the forms of the service were far from being then what they are at present.

On the opening of the campaign, an opportunity soon occurred of becoming better acquainted. These gay young soldiers, eager to meet the enemy, felt delighted at the prospect afforded them by the battle of Valcour*, of coming to close quarters. Mounted upon their

* In 1689.—*Editor.*

prancing chargers, they indulged in sallies of youthful mirth and levity. Bondy, raising his head, and in a stern tone of command, which they had never seen him assume, exclaimed—

"Silence, gentlemen! Fall back into the ranks. I must be able to see right and left."

The tone, the gesture, and the unusual manner assumed by this officer, overawed the young boasters. They silently obeyed his command, and riveted their attention upon the weather-beaten face hitherto considered unworthy of notice, but which now assumed the steady, dignified, and imposing appearance calculated to fix the fortune of the day. A very short time after, Bondy called the major to him—

"Pleinsève," said he, "mount your white horse, and repair instantly to the gilded troop* you see yonder. Keep as close as you can to the general. You will shortly hear a demand for cavalry; you will then throw up your hat into the air. Do you understand me? Be quick—I shall keep my eye upon you."

The circumstance occurred, just as his experience had foreseen. The signal agreed upon was given. This officer, who appeared scarcely able to bear his breast-plate, threw his cloak over one of his shoulders, and his whole person assumed a commanding and martial appearance.

"Now, then," he cried, "sound the kettle-drum;"

* The staff.

and advancing with his men, he arrived, just at the proper time, on the very spot where his assistance was wanted. Our troops were worsted. This old and skilful officer arrested the pursuit of the enemy, and in the evening, Bondy and the brigade of Besons were the only subjects of conversation at head-quarters. Our young heroes, proud of belonging to the corps, but feeling confused at the praises bestowed upon them, repaired to their veteran and worthy commander, to whom they knew all the merit was due; they found him as before the engagement, cold, sedate, and inflexible. They now knew, however, how to appreciate his worth, and from that time always paid him the greatest deference and respect. It is thus that during active military service, as at any other time, or even perhaps more than at any other time, true merit is always modest: it waits for an opportunity of showing itself, and seizes it when it occurs, but without ostentation, frequently allowing the meed of success to be enjoyed by vain-glorious boasters. The young French nobles at all times display military spirit; at this period they were eminently military, and distinguished for their courage and greatness of mind. My father has given but few particulars relative to the early services of my grandfather *, who speedily acquired the reputa-

* During his campaigns he was always in the hottest of the fight; but this man, so magnanimous in everything he did, never spoke of himself. War was the constant theme of his conversation,

tion of being one of the best officers of his day; and indeed nobody appeared better qualified for a soldier's life. Active, brilliant, eager, indefatigable, he seemed never to require sleep; fearless even to excess, his vigilance was unparalleled. A smile of daring played upon his features amid the most appalling dangers. Kind and generous towards his soldiers, dignified with his officers, but harsh and severe towards the negligent, his men were his own, and his only; indeed, every corps became his when he was seen at its head. His first campaign was an earnest of his future fame. He, however, wrote nothing in his retirement, on account of the loss of his right arm. We know only that he was continually going to war, according to the received expression of the day; that is to say, in order to learn his profession, he accompanied the most skilful officers in their detached expeditions*. These commis-

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according to the fashion of the times, but he previously apologised to the ladies for introducing the subject—a sort of compliment which always excited my astonishment, for I could imagine nothing more agreeable than those animated and glowing descriptions. To speak the truth, his eloquence, though rather overbearing for others, when his vivacity got the better of that urbanity which was the characteristic of the manners of those days, was so brilliant and dignified, that his house was the evening resort of people who came for the sole purpose of listening to him.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

* Light troops were then unknown; they first came into use a long time after. When Louis XIV, who had no less than 500,000 men, raised two or three regiments of hussars, it was

sions for going to war in detachments were in the gift of the general, and my grandfather was extremely anxious to participate in them. It was in these expeditions that we were accused of always attacking the Germans with inferior numbers. These detachments frequently displayed the utmost rashness, and the generous-minded Turenne was always ready to support them against public malevolence, ever eager to vituperate those who suffer themselves to be beaten.

"It is my own fault," this great man would say; "I ought to have known that there would be, at that spot, a stronger detachment of the enemy. But I know the

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merely to give an asylum and employment to some noble Hungarian exiles, whose insurrections he had instigated in order to create a diversion against the emperor. The "free companies," as they were called, were objects of contempt, as they made plunder their profession; and such troops never numbered among their ranks the youth of that period, who were neither given to marauding nor inclined to flee from the enemy. Lauzun, during his short-lived favour, had raised regiments of dragoons, and an attempt had been made to bring them into vogue by asserting that the service of both infantry and cavalry was learned in those corps. But though some general officers of reputation which they produced appeared to give weight to this opinion, the fact was never universally admitted. The duke of Vendome and Marshal Turenne both said, that when there were two regiments of dragoons in the army there was one too many, and they did not know what to do with it. But everything is changed now, everything has become light, and I should not be much surprised to see some day the soldiers of the heavy cavalry dressed in silk or dimity pantaloons, and mounted upon short-tailed ponies. —*Note by Mirabeau.*

commander of mine. He is a brave man, and I will give him an opportunity of taking his revenge *.

* Mirabeau relates elsewhere an anecdote, containing a most remarkable fact, which furnishes a proof of the admirable magnanimity of the great Turenne. "Marshal Choiseul related, that whilst he was colonel, he had the misfortune to absent himself for a short time, to attend to some love affair. It happened that while thus engaged, his regiment received orders to escort a convoy. The corps was attacked by the enemy, and particularly distinguished itself under the command of the lieutenant-colonel. This was an irreparable fault at that time, and must always be considered in that light. The regiment was ordered to join the army, and Choiseul followed quite in despair, with the resolution of immuring himself in the first convent of Chartreux he should find, when he received a complimentary letter from one of his friends, by which he learnt that M. de Turenne had said—

"'I had charged the Count of Choiseul with a secret mission, and thus deprived him of the opportunity of distinguishing himself; I am really very sorry for it.'

"The poor count came secretly, and fell, with tears in his eyes, at the feet of his second father, from whom any reproof would have been superfluous; and when this thoughtless youth became marshal of France, he related the anecdote. This is true tolerance and magnanimity. But mark how much the country gained by it: a general instead of a Carthusian monk." (*Advice to a young Prince, who feels the necessity of correcting his education*, by the Count of Mirabeau, 1788, pages 54, 55).

Let us add here two remarks, which redound to the honour of these illustrious individuals:—First. It was more than twenty years after the death of Turenne that the Count of Choiseul made this confession, which a more vain or less grateful man might have concealed altogether. Secondly, this same Count of Choiseul was nephew of the general who gained the battle of Rhétel, in 1650, the only one which Turenne ever really lost.

We shall add, that Thomas attributes a similar act of generosity

Besides these small detachments, excursions of greater magnitude were made, particularly in winter. If there had been but one Boufflers in Europe*, the army could never have been sure of a single month of repose. This indefatigable man, of iron frame, whose ambition made him aspire to everything, but above all to distinguish himself as a soldier—who owed his rise to his unwearied perseverance, zeal, and intrepidity, always set the example to his army, having adopted as his principle, that pain and death itself are the only legitimate objects of a soldier's ambition, and ought to prove his only end and aim. He used to say, with the utmost coolness, that at the close of a campaign, a soldier and his horse ought only to weigh eighty pounds, and a foot soldier twenty-seven pounds, including his baggage. This military exaggeration merely goes to prove, that with him no use could be made of the word impossible †.

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to Marshal Saxe, in the notes which follow his eulogy upon that warrior, page 418 of the second volume of the works of Thomas, Paris. Firmin Didot, 1822.—*Editor.*

* Louis François, Marshal and Duke of Boufflers, born in 1644, died in 1711.—*Editor.*

† This great man, for that title must be given to him who never deserved reproach, though he reached the summit of fortune, had already acquired high renown, by his vigorous defence of Namur. He commanded in Flanders, whence he continually harassed the enemy in their winter quarters, which always proved particularly distressing to the Germans. Indeed it was sometimes quite sufficient to disturb them, when they hoped to enjoy repose, in order to make them evacuate whole provinces, which was the case during the famous campaign of Turenne, in 1674. The Duke of Boufflers kept the

That spirit of independence and daring, which is the peculiar characteristic of the French youth, and so

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enemy always on the alert, and his young and ardent followers not less so. These were anxious to see service and earn distinction. When the Duke of Boufflers repaired to Paris or to court, they whose corps were stationed in the towns under his command, and thus liable to receive sudden orders, had their spies about his person, in order to be informed in time of his intentions. When he appeared at the opera, they did not feel secure before they had ascertained that there existed at his residence no indication of departure. In spite of these precautions, they were often deceived; for he used to travel with little or no baggage. Frost and snow seemed his natural elements. He made excursions into the remotest provinces of the Low Countries, and sometimes penetrated as far as Westphalia. The rapidity of his movements can only be compared to that of lightning. Forests, mountains, rivers, were no obstacles to him; and he always returned by another route. When his detachment came back to their quarters, to repair their losses and recruit their strength, he used to take leave of his companions, and jestingly say—

"I send you back to the ladies to seek repose, and your corps shall not move until the opening of the campaign."

But no sooner were they on the road to Paris, than they learnt that their general was gone, at the head of another detachment, to gather fresh laurels. What a cause for regret to those ardent young soldiers, burning with anxiety to distinguish themselves, and obliged to appear in town, to hear or to read in a person's looks remarks like the following:

"So! you could not wait until it was over!"

Such was the school in which the French youth learnt to become hardy and brave. It has since been asserted, and poets and other sycophantic writers, who have become the panegyrists of the manners of those times, have stated, that a luxurious life and its attendant pastimes, do not prevent Frenchmen from being ever brave and venturesome, at the first signal of war. Bold and brave I grant

eminently distinguished the young nobles of those days, formed too prominent and constitutional a feature in my grandfather's character for him not to have

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they are; but should valour itself be found with an enervated frame, which I deny, it is not the only quality required in war. Strength of body, patience to endure privations and hardships without murmuring; a contempt for comfort; a kind of love of fatigue; a wish to brave the inclemencies of the seasons, with that soldier-like resolution which makes those very hardships, as it were, their auxiliaries, while they are the tyrants of the rest of mankind:—such are the indispensable qualifications of true warriors. Unconquerable resolution, which is seldom the concomitant of an effeminate education, and the habits of a luxurious life, is not to be expected from our young men brought up in the arts, accustomed to frequent our theatres and other sinks of corruption, from our Sybarites in short, who know not how to appreciate others, nor to raise themselves in their own estimation; to whom neither example nor prejudice instil any desire of acquiring celebrity, or any notions of glory, which in the eyes of our modern town-philosophers is a puerile illusion. To the great advantage of the country, public opinion formerly rendered this pretended illusion a reality, during that period of life when the natural glow of youthful feeling gives soul and substance to every source of enthusiasm. Thus, although the competitors were numerous, and that state-canker, an excessive increase of regular troops, had created numberless offices in the army, really good commanders became from that period every day more rare.

It is, however, quite impossible to form any idea of the military spirit of those days, from that of our own times. Although Louis XIV had established order and obedience in every branch of the state; although Louvois had imparted to the administration of military affairs all the resources of his art, all the weight of his authority, and impetuosity of character, and the ascendency which he derived from the success and support of his master, who, better than any man, could say, "I WILL,"—although he had established an exact discipline, and, above all,

furnished his full share of singular and lofty actions, at a period which may be deemed the dawn of innovation. For instance, in order the more effectually to

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subordination among the officers upon whom the obedience of the privates depends, there still remained much sap and verdure, and the spirit of faction had given way to that of personal independence. It is true that oppression, superciliousness, and even covetousness, were no longer the characteristics of the military, but they were still licentious and overbearing. The king loved the army, and supported his officers when it was requisite, against the privileged and the formalists. For he felt how much he stood in need of officers of merit, and he knew how utterly impossible it was to make that man tremble before a police agent, who was to appear undaunted before the enemy. He wished to render the military submissive, but not to degrade them, and the reigning pedantry of the pen went for nothing in his system of managing such matters. A great general was considered the first man in the state, and the different ranks enjoyed a proportionate degree of respect. The truth is, the national genius, which may easily be corrupted, and subsequently destroyed, but which can never be forced, would not have borne more rapid modifications. The nobles were still proud, and would not have submitted to an idle residence, nor have conformed to servile deferences; in a word, they would not have tolerated those useless, ridiculous, and degrading minutiæ, which have since been considered the perfection of discipline. For instance, I have heard my grandfather say, that, in the whole course of his life, he never would be present at camps of peace, which always appeared to him no better than puppet-shows. It is well known that it would have been dangerous to propose to the officers of those days to wear uniforms, still less to fix the size of their horses or the length of their ruffles. The anecdote of the Marquis of Coetquen is well known. This nobleman, of a high family of Brittany, and the chief of a still powerful house, was cashiered at the head of his regiment by the king himself, who was reviewing it, and had ordered him to appear in uniform. The marquis said—

support the order which Louvois wished to establish in the army, that minister relied principally upon the introduction of the practice of inspection. By such means he certainly destroyed the long established abuses of sham soldiers *, and dead pay †. But the inspection was on that very account looked upon with

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" Fortunately, Sir, I still preserve the torn fragments!"—*Note by Mirabeau* [1].

* Interlopers in the profession, who appeared in the ranks only to pass muster, without being enrolled.—*Tr.*

† Soldiers who always remain in garrison, and never perform actual service.—*Tr.*

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[1] We have thought that these observations on the marked changes that have taken place within the space of only a few years, would appear interesting to the reader. We shall add to them three extracts.

" Who would have thought at that time, that they would succeed in rendering military spirit supple, and making it degenerate into a legionary spirit, to such a degree, that the general officers, and even the marshals of France should wear uniforms! "—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

" They have given a uniform to the general officers, without reflecting that this fantastical prerogative is an admission that the general officers are beings unknown to the soldiers. It is easy to foresee what confidence the soldiers will place in commanders who must be made known by a distinctive mark, without which the men would not recognise them."—*Essay on Despotism*, ed. 1775, p. 162.

" Forty years ago, an officer who appeared in the field of battle with his uniform would have been dishonoured. An officer not wearing his at the present day would be looked upon as a madman, independently of the penalty attached by the military code to his disobedience."—*Essay on Despotism*, p. 137.

the greatest jealousy. The persons who profit by these abuses are never those who oppose the greatest resistance, or complain the most; but they urge on the young men, especially such as are above the suspicion of being actuated by interested motives, and whose natural pride makes them consider a sacred prerogative every thing that bears the semblance of independence.

Louvois at first gave those commissions to old unflinching officers, whom he called his apostles. Though sold to his authority, they soon became weary of playing the part of scape-goats, and commissions were then issued, giving no other power than that of making a return of the effective members of the several corps. This duty was the employment of newly created functionaries. General officers, under the name of inspectors, exercised a jurisdiction over the number of the men and their discipline, but only during an annual review. Although supported by the minister, they were obliged at first to proceed with the utmost caution, as is shown by the well-known circumstance which occurred between M. de Santena and M. d'Artagnan, the latter of whom became afterwards Marshal Montesquiou. With regard to the commissioners, they remained for a length of time entirely distinct from the military, and were barely tolerated. A dignified submission to their scarcely acknowledged authority alone induced the officers to appear before them. This explanation was neces-

sary for comprehending the following anecdote, which certainly may be considered more than a practical joke.

One day my grandfather arrived at a review the very moment it was taking place. Alighting from his horse, he went directly to the Major, who instantly said to the Commissioner—

" There, Sir, is M. Mirabeau, whom I told you would not fail to be here in the course of the day."

The Commissioner replied, that he was very sorry, but his duty was to review the troops, and make a report of the men missing; that the troops had passed before him, and the captain was not present; that he had nothing to do with any other circumstance, and consequently the review was closed for M. Mirabeau, who would " be reported absent."

Mirabeau allowed the Major to plead his cause, and exclaim against the Commissioner's severity; but the inspecting officer, who strictly adhered to his instructions, refused to alter his decision. The young captain, who till then had remained silent, now approached the Commissioner, and with the utmost coolness said to him,—

" I am then, absent, Sir?"

" Yes, Sir."

" In that case this takes places during my absence:" so saying, Mirabeau attacked the Commissioner with his horsewhip, and gave him, in the middle of the parade, a singular dilemma to solve.

The banterers of the day were not in favour of the minister's men, and my grandfather willingly took upon himself the office of playing them all sorts of tricks. Marshal Maulevrier, who was his contemporary, relates of him, that being one day in the ante-chamber of M. de Saint Pouange, assistant to the war minister, La Chétardie, an old officer who had risen from the ranks, came from the ministerial closet. This veteran was a brave and estimable man, but a confidential servant of the Government, who had appointed him to the command of Old Brissac. He was, moreover, miserly, rude, and had been an "apostle," at the time the inspectors went by that name. My grandfather, who had the large eyes of his race, had a trick of entirely disfiguring himself by turning up his eyelids, and thereby changing his whole appearance in the most grotesque manner, so that no one could recognise him. Indeed, during these freaks no one would have suspected him to be the handsome man he really was. Having thus altered his appearance, he accosted La Chétardie, saying in a loud voice,—

"Good day, Mr. Commissioner; you have pulled us to pieces in a fine manner, in yonder closet, have you not?"

La Chétardie having cast his eyes upon the extraordinary countenance before him, and not recognising my grandfather, joined a group of officers, who, of course, took especial care not to divulge the trick.

" Do you know that person?" he inquired.

" No; he is certainly some fresh arrival, some Hungarian, or Hibernian."

Mirabeau thereupon advanced, and continued—

" After all, Mr. Commissioner, you follow there a very sorry employment."

" What does the man mean, with his Mr. Commissioner?" exclaimed La Chétardie, turning away; " the best thing I can do is to leave him to himself, for this is not a fit moment to answer him."

He then quitted the ante-chamber, and returning soon after, addressed my grandfather himself, who had pulled down his eye-lids, and turned the cuffs and facings of his great coat, which, according to the fashion of the day, were of different colours, asking him, " what had become of the ugly stranger."

Such pranks are seldom found allied to loftiness of soul and dignity of character; and this apparent anomaly was the peculiar characteristic of my grandfather. The same Marshal Maulevrier used to relate, that being one day at the Œil-de-Bœuf, with a great many officers, Father Lachaise passed by, followed by his courtiers. My grandfather asked his comrades who that person was.

" He is the king's confessor," they replied; and he knew it as well as they did.

" And why do people follow that priest?"

" Because all ecclesiastical preferment is his gift."

" Shall I show you how to address this priest?"

" You are again going to commit some folly?"

" Oh, no! you shall see."

My grandfather immediately accosted Father La Chaise with a reverential air; the latter, unaccustomed to be spoken to by men of Mirabeau's profession, but naturally polite and affable, stopt and listened to him.

" Reverend father," said my grandfather, " I have frequently waited upon you, but at my age, and following the profession I do, I cannot hope for a privileged admission. However, my brother, who resides at a great distance, and whose time is entirely absorbed by the duties of his sacred calling, has none but myself, on whom he can rely to bring him to the king's notice, through the channel of those persons who deservingly enjoy his majesty's confidence. He serves the church to the best of his abilities, whilst I serve his majesty in the army. It is for his superiors to give their testimony of his zeal, but it is my duty to place him under your especial protection, which I do the more confidently, because having nothing in his favour but his name and the services of his ancestors, he is entirely destitute of patronage."

" It is no doubt our duty to grant protection," replied the smooth-tongued Jesuit, who thought by the dignified and easy manner of my grandfather, that he

was speaking to some one well known to him—" Yes, Sir, your brother is a worthy person; all the accounts I have received are most favourable to him, and I shall feel great pleasure in submitting his claims to the king's consideration. I consider this my duty, Sir; but opportunities are so rare, and the number of applicants so great, that the king cannot do all he wishes. His majesty is perfectly aware that the merit being equal, the military services of those members of the family who have injured their fortunes in the army must necessarily have great weight in the distribution of his favours, and that meritorious officers, in their own disinterestedness, find themselves rewarded by the promotion of other members of their families. Such is the principle his majesty acts upon, and I shall be the first to induce him to apply it in favour of your brother when an opportunity offers."

" You promise me this, then?"

" I do, Sir, as soon as an opportunity occurs."

My grandfather now drew back, bowing in the most respectful manner. Those who had heard his speech assured him that he had said nothing but what every one said on similar occasions.

" And the answer?"

" Why, it was nearly the same that he gives to every body."

" Very well; but the fact is, I have no brother!"

And, indeed, he had no other brother than the Che-

valier Hannibal of Mirabeau, who was any thing but a poor curate, being at that time a lieutenant in the navy.

These youthful specimens of the character of a man who afterwards became so dignified, prove that turn of mind, free and sincere, which, united to undaunted valour, forms those superior beings destined to become the leaders of their fellow-men. My grandfather was one of these privileged beings, and the more deservedly so, because he never ordered any thing without first executing it himself, if there was the slightest danger or fatigue to undergo, or any sacrifice to be made, and because there was not a fault in him that did not proceed from some virtue. This was the well known compensation for his excessive impetuosity. M. D'Estoublon, his brother-in-law, once saved his life by merely pronouncing his name. They were entering the opera together through a passage, in which there was a barrier. Having met some friends with whom they promised to sup, my grandfather called back his servant to give orders respecting the wine to be taken to the place of meeting. The servant advancing too far, was on the point of passing the barrier, whilst his master was coming towards him. The serjeant on duty rudely repulsed the servant, and Mirabeau imprudently struck the serjeant with such violence as to knock him into the guard-house. Luckily, at the moment when the soldier cried "help!" D'Estoublon exclaimed—

" Ah ! Mirabeau, what have you done ? "

At these words the serjeant ordered his men in again, saying—

" Sir, you were on the point of being killed by the serjeant belonging to your uncle's company ! "

" My friend, I ask your forgiveness," replied my grandfather ; " but as you are a prudent man, never push back anybody, in the presence of a young madman !"

Next day he sent the serjeant a handsome present, and the man would have sacrificed his life for him.

A daring spirit is truly odious when it is oppressive, and does not respect the rights of others, or tramples upon the weak, or those unable to defend themselves either on account of their sex, their age, their situation, or their means. It then degenerates into pride, a repulsive vice, or into insolence, a dastardly one. But when a spirit of this nature is allied to justice and generosity, the ordinary virtues of strong and fiery temperaments, it infallibly commands the love and respect of the lower orders, forming, it is true, the least brilliant portion of society—but, at the same time, the most useful. This courage, bordering upon rashness, was one of the characteristics of our family, and always made it beloved by the people. The two brothers, John Anthony and Hannibal, experienced this at Marseilles, under very critical circumstances, which may serve to illustrate the manners of

those times, a period at which it has been thought, and with good reason, that despotism had reached its climax. There existed in Provence a deep-rooted aversion for every person or thing connected with custom-houses, imposts, indirect taxes, and collectors. It may easily be foreseen, from what I have said respecting the commissioners and inspectors, that my grandfather was not one of those who submitted the most patiently to interrogatories and searches at gates, barriers, and passages. All these establishments, then new, were the oppressive results of the modern plan of fiscal revenue, and of the mercantile prohibitions adopted in favour of our own manufactories. These inventions by Colbert, (not, indeed, in the discovery of the system, but in making it the main stay of the state finances, and in enforcing its execution with all the power of government), these inventions, I repeat, to which habit had not yet reconciled the people, excited universal detestation. The king, however, protected them with the most unmitigated severity, and determined perseverance. He, himself, set the example of obedience, by allowing his own equipages to be searched; but the inquisitorial plan did not prosper the more.

My grandfather and his brother were at this period at Marseilles. A porter who wore the livery of the family, but was known to be a smuggler, was followed by the revenue officers, and sought refuge in the court of our house, whither the officers followed him. The

doors were immediately closed, and the servants being armed, attacked the officers. There were three of them, and they were cruelly beaten. When the doors were at last opened, and the poor devils allowed to go out, one of them fell down, nearly killed by a blow he had received on the head. This disturbance roused the populace; they cried out that the doors of the Marquis of Mirabeau's house had been forced, and they rushed through all the streets, uttering vociferations and threats, and shouting—

"Long live Mirabeau! Shall we throw them all into the sea?"

The public offices were closed; and in order to appease the tumult, my grandfather and uncle were obliged to leave the city, and seek refuge at Mirabeau. The excise officers immediately complained to M. Le Bret, then intendant. He promised a great deal, but did nothing. These complaints being made a second time, the intendant replied—

"Gentlemen, I have reflected that your establishment requires to be consolidated by time, and that personal quarrels ought particularly to be avoided. The Mirabeau family are highly connected, and are powerful in this province. They are more easily excited than appeased. I therefore am of opinion that the better way—— "

The officers understood what he meant, and nothing more was said upon the subject in Provence. But my

grandfather, who had a peculiar talent for settling such matters in his own way, wrote a polite letter to M. Le Riche, farmer-general of the department, father of the elegant La Popelinière, who made himself so notorious by his extravagant and singular expenses, stating that if he heard anything more respecting the business, he would treat him in the same manner his men had been treated at Marseilles, the very first time he met him at the Opera. Le Riche sent this letter to M. de Barbezieux, for the farmers-general were not yet able to take the law into their own hands. When this minister, who was still young, saw my grandfather, he said to him—

"You must be satisfied with killing those people, without writing them threatening letters."

Was this excessive lenity? Perhaps so. However, men of my grandfather's stamp might be annihilated, but not subdued. They who possess unshaken perseverance of character, and seem even anxious to overcome impossibilities, are too valuable not to be held in great respect by true statesmen, and by princes desirous of achieving great things. An able general can preserve the nation only by means of a good army, and an army is only good when it possesses officers who spurn every species of subordination, except such as emanates from the stern dictates of duty and honour.

The quick and lively temper which my grandfather showed in his youth, and which was displayed under a

different form in his riper years, without ever leaving him, spurred him on with most extraordinary energy, in the various duties of his profession. He has been heard to remark, that a military man should always study and do the duty of the rank above him.

"There are men born to obey," would he observe; "others are born to command—two things perfectly dissimilar."

This sentence is by far more profound and true than the hackneyed aphorism, "that it is necessary to know how to obey, in order to learn how to command." He was truly one of those men who receive from nature the genius of command, but he was not blinded by presumption. He used often to say, that at the end of his two first campaigns, if he did not inwardly flatter himself, he should become as great a general as his two idols, Marshal Turenne and the Duke of Vendome; he thought at least that the science of commanding was not very difficult, and that with a well mounted staff, extreme vigilance, and unwearied attention in increasing the number of spies, and paying them beyond their hopes, he should be able to do as well as another; "but," he added, "when I had made ten campaigns, I had almost lost confidence in my own capacity."

This species of unrestrained freedom, so consonant with military manners, and of which I have related several instances, did not prevent men of great

capacity, who aimed at high military honours, from adopting early in life the tone of command; and in order to qualify themselves, they evinced the highest respect for fame honourably won, which supposes a lively emulation to acquire the same *.

* The slightest shades in this respect are invaluable, because they show the character of the age. My grandfather had a beautiful head of hair; nevertheless, at the age of five and twenty, he wore a wig, which appears the most extraordinary ornament of those days. His motive was to render his features more imposing by making himself look older. This sort of speculation would, at the present day, scarcely be tolerated in some youthful disciple of Esculapius, eager to get into practice. But we must call to mind the age which Louis XIV had then attained. That monarch, whom my father termed "the perfect model of the form of command," had for a length of time been the sole arbiter of the national opinion on all points, and he had reached that precise period of life when a commanding air, the natural effect of habitual dignity of deportment, attains its highest perfection, and becomes the only resource of a self-love naturally desirous of keeping up external advantages. It is sufficient to look at the portraits of Louis XIV from his childhood until past his thirtieth year, to see that he was the handsomest man in the kingdom, at a period when nature seemed prodigal of manly beauty, which indeed appears to be often the case under monarchs who entertain a marked predilection for this natural advantage. His countenance was, however, mild, and bore no expression of absolutism. On the triumphal arches, in the emblematical representations of him, on his monuments, and in his palaces, he was first painted, during his youth, with the features of the Apollo of Phidias, and afterwards the painters gave him an air of pride, with all its usual attendants. Henry IV and Gustavus Adolphus, in their portraits, appear to look at us just like other

I have heard my father relate an anecdote respecting a mistake on this head, made by his father, who told

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men; but there is not a doctor of Sorbonne, of the times to which I refer, or a burgher of Paris, whose portrait does not seem in the very act of uttering the *quos ego* of Virgil. It is observable even in the engraving of the good Lafontaine. It is quite vexatious to see half a profile, overshadowed with a tremendous wig, and a nose like that of a major, giving the word of command, at a battle against rats and weasels.

Thus, Louis XIV gave the character to his portraits and statues, and took it from them in return for his habitual attitudes. He was partial to a thick head of hair, and the company of hair-dressers are still proud of the privileges which this regulating monarch conferred upon them. At the age when man loses this advantage, he supplied its place with a wig, which at that period became an ornament before unknown amongst us—false hair having merely been made use of as a kind of border to the skull-caps used by bald people. The wig was necessarily made high, in order to harmonise with the expression of countenance the king wished to give himself; a power he always possessed to such a supreme degree, that with him there never was any appearance of art. He adopted an elevated nature as his guide, like a man who feels that he is always exposed to public view. Now, as vanity and affectation are awkward and displeasing, because they are wholly connected with self, so decorum and simplicity are graceful and elegant, because they relate to others. Whatever ridicule may have been since thrown upon every kind of etiquette and pomp, the harshest epithet applied to full-bottomed wigs, has been to call them antiquated. Indeed, it would be impossible to deny that this head dress is so perfectly in unison with the expression of Louis XIV, that it has become, as it were, part of the idea and recollections which we preserve of that prince. Every one, in his day,—rivals, detractors, friends, enemies, all received his nod as law. A man left off his hair to wear a wig when he wished to impose upon himself, and upon others, a sense of superior dignity. Would it not have been, indeed, difficult, with

it himself. From it I have drawn the inference, that men of merit are valuable in a state, even when their talents are no longer required. They are the natural rallying-points of public esteem, and of the ambitious emulation of ardent young men, over whom this feeling can alone exercise any sway.

My grandfather, being one day in company, observed a little old man, blind of one eye, and rather shabbily dressed, who talked with great volubility and vivacity in a most peremptory tone, rising frequently from his chair and reseating himself with quick and hasty motions, and not unfrequently finishing his sentences with his back to the fire,—a vulgar liberty never taken at that time. The order of St. Louis did not then exist *, and the old gentleman wore no distinctive mark of any profession. He decided in an authoritative tone upon every subject, so much so that he appeared only an impertinent chatterer to the Marquis of Mirabeau, who could not conceive how such a man was tolerated in good society. My grandfather, at length, losing patience, asked who he was; and received for answer,—

"What! you do not know the Marquis of Montal?"

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this head dress, to indulge in the game of prison-bars, as we have seen princes do in public in our own time? Thus, manners depend upon the fashion, and the fashion upon manners.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* This order was founded in 1693.

This Marquis of Montal, one of the best generals of his day, was a man of high renown. He had never been made Marshal of France, on account of an answer, savouring too much of military frankness, which he had the boldness to make to Louis XIV. As a follower of the Prince's party, he had defended Mezières against the king, to whom he surrendered the town, after a most determined resistance. A long time after, being with the army in the same town, and dining with the king, his Majesty said to him—

" Montal, do you recollect our having met here formerly ? "

" Yes, Sir," replied Montal; " and had our powder not been exhausted, your majesty would still be outside the walls *."

Montal, not much in favour after this speech, was not the less celebrated. My grandfather had heard, at Steinkerque, the cry, " To us, Montal," bring back the whole of the infantry to the charge, with such intrepidity, that a perfect surprise was changed into a complete victory. Such was the feat of the little old man, who at first was mistaken for an impertinent chatterer.

" The moment I heard his name mentioned," said

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* Mirabeau, who has not made any reflection here upon this anecdote, has elsewhere censured, with justice, the king's question, calling it " an indiscreet remark, perhaps, from a master."— *Advice to a young Prince, who feels the necessity of correcting his education*, p. 63.

my grandfather, "I found his manners noble, his motions and his impatience those of a hero. His eloquence was manly, impressive, and persuasive. He was, however, the same man, and I was nothing but a fool."

In 1696, my grandfather obtained a regiment of infantry, or, as it was then styled, permission to treat with M. de Clerembault. According to the regulations established by Louvois, an officer was obliged to serve four years as Mousquetaire, and ten years as captain of cavalry. This minister died in 1691, and his regulations remained in force until the great war, which broke out at the commencement of the century, when Chamillard, old and incompetent, allowed it to fall into disuse. My grandfather had not therefore the usual delay to undergo. He was about thirty years of age when he obtained his regiment, which he found perfectly well composed. An anecdote, which my father has heard him relate, and which reflects honour on the individual to whom it refers, will give an idea of the soldiers of those times.

One day, as my grandfather was inspecting his men, he observed a soldier who shouldered his firelock in an awkward manner. He was on the point of reprimanding him, when the major of the regiment whispered—

"You shall know the reason of this, Colonel."

They passed on, and the officer related the following fact.

The regiment was quartered at Sarrelouis, and it was then forbidden, as it is still, for soldiers in garrison to

fight duels. Tbe penalty incurred by the infringement of this regulation was to have the right hand cut off. This man, seeing two of his comrades fighting, rushed towards them, and, in obedience to the military regulation, which does not allow of two swords once crossed in fight being separated, except with a sword, drew his own, and throwing himself between the combatants, exclaimed—

" My friends, what are you doing?"

The guard was instantly on the spot. The two guilty soldiers fled, and the corporal (for the man had that rank), who remained, because he had done nothing wrong, was seized, with his drawn sword still in his hand, and conducted to the guard-house. He related the circumstance just as it had occurred. A court-martial assembled. He appeared before it with firmness, and stated the exact truth. The court asked him to give up the names of the guilty parties, and upon his refusal, threatened him with the punishment he had incurred, although with good intentions. He coolly replied—

" I know them, gentlemen, but I will not name them, and certainly not place them in the same situation I am in. Which of you would denounce his comrade? I will preserve two men for the king's service. Few soldiers are certain of being able to perform such service. I have incurred the penalty, and will undergo it. I only ask one favour: that is, to lose my left hand, that I may still be able to wield my sword for more meritorious actions."

There is too much of that servile spirit in the subaltern officer, which makes him glory in following the strict letter of the law in all its severity. He either will not, or dares not, emancipate himself from that superstitious sternness which costs vulgar minds so little, when exercised at the expense of others. This brave soldier was condemned, and was thankful for the mitigation of the sentence, which allowed him to preserve his right hand. When placed before the block, he said to the executioner—

" I have suffered the humiliation and the sentence for the sake of example. This is the penalty. The remainder is the king's order: I shall execute it myself. It must be done by the hand of a soldier. Retire, and give me the axe." He took it, and at one blow severed his left hand. This was the soldier who held his firelock with the stump of his arm.

It may be easily imagined that the attachment which my grandfather always felt for his soldiers was in no wise diminished by this heroic action. He looked upon the soldier as the child of the officer, and the colonel as the head of the family. He was literally adored by his men, and the troops which he commanded relied on this feeling, which many years after, in Italy, made them say—

" Do not let us approach Mirabeau. It will not do to-day. The men may get a wetting."

I have heard a military frolic related, of a more serious

nature, but which, making allowances for the difference of age, and greater experience, still bears evidence of that vivacity and decision which never forsook him.

At the close of a campaign, the Marquis of Nettancourt and my grandfather were returning to France with their regiments. They had already passed the frontier, and made two halts, when arriving at a town situated on the third line, and in the interior of the kingdom, the officers of the quarter-master's department came to inform them that the privates and non-commissioned officers were to encamp on the glacis, and the officers alone enter the town. This news was the more disagreeable to the men, because they were to remain in these quarters, and the season was far advanced. They had thought that tents were not to be used till the spring, and this disappointment, attributed to the predilection of the military authorities of the town for the burghers, greatly irritated the commanding officers, who, however, immediately made up their minds how to act. It was necessary to pass near the gate in order to reach the place of encampment. They gave directions to a lieutenant of grenadiers, to take the lead, quicken the step when they should be close to the guard-house, and seize the arms of the guard before the drummers could announce that the regiments were defiling. The officer chosen for this feat fulfilled his mission with dexterity and promptitude, and with the less difficulty, as this sort of invasion was totally unexpected. The

regiments then arrived, and instead of proceeding to the glacis, entered the town, and placed themselves in battle array on the great square. A guard was then placed at the commandant's door, and a demand for billets sent to the town-hall. Forage and provisions being already provided, nothing of the kind was demanded, and the greatest order prevailed. The colonels then sent an express to the court, informing the minister that having been received and billeted in the other fortified towns, and finding the gates of this place shut against the king's troops, they conceived it their duty, considering the state of the times, to make themselves masters of it, and secure the governor's person; and that as, according to their marching orders, they were to remain in that town, they should have time to receive the king's commands on the subject. Their messenger returned in three days, and the minister, who knew them both, wrote to them that the king did not entertain the slightest uneasiness respecting the fidelity of the commandant, and ordered them to continue their route.

The regiment under my grandfather's command stood in need of the strictest economy, on account of the low state of its finances. Two majors had successively carried off the military chest, and were at that moment detained in some fortress. M. d'Apremont, the lieutenant-colonel, a man distinguished by his birth and reputation, was extremely anxious to retire from

the service. Peace had just been concluded *. This respectable officer, worn out with continued hard service, foresaw that the Spanish succession would kindle a new war, and feared that he should be unable to quit the service with a good grace, if his conjectures proved correct. My grandfather solicited the retirement of M. d'Apremont, the lieutenant-colonelcy for M. de Narbonne, who was next in rank, and a majority for M. de la Javellière, a captainof not long standing. The permission for M. d'Apremont's retirement arrived; the lieutenant-colonelcy was granted to M. de Narbonne, but with regard to the majority, the answer was deferred. My grandfather, unaccustomed to a refusal, and unwilling to allow the minister to contract such a habit, repaired immediately to court, and calling upon M. Barbezieux, demanded an explanation. The minister told him that it was the king's will that M. de la Javellèire should not be promoted.

"Pray, Sir," said my grandfather, "has the king confided a regiment to me, and reserved to himself all controul over it?"

"But," said the astonished minister, "do you suppose that the king has given you your regiment?"

"No, certainly; I have purchased my regiment, for the purpose of getting my bones broken in his majesty's service; but as my life and honour are both at stake,

* The peace of Ryswick, 1697.

I am answerable for my regiment upon both, and it is for me to know and dispose of those for whom I am responsible. The king and his minister have reserved every possible right of examination into my own conduct, but they possess no controul over my regiment but with my acquiescence."

" Well, Sir, your memorials and your choice, particularly with regard to your field officers, form part of your conduct; the king confirms that part of it which he approves of, and refuses the rest."

" It is the reason of this refusal, Sir, that I ask."

" You are partial to M. de la Javellière, but he is one of the youngest officers of the regiment, and does not possess the talents which would justify his being preferred to his seniors in the service."

" I did not ask for the command of a regiment in order to form friendships, and exercise predilections, and M. de la Javellière is little calculated to inspire those preferences; but his conduct is correct, and he possesses six thousand francs a year (a very rare thing in the infantry). It is necessary that my regiment, which has been twice robbed by its majors, should have a trustworthy paymaster *. With regard to his capacity, that is my business; I demand from my subordinates nothing but zeal and punctuality. But I entreat you

* In those days the major acted as paymaster, and kept the military chest.—*Tr.*

to inform me upon what this reproach of preference is founded?"

"It was remarked, that one day, in reviewing your regiment, having found M. de la Javellière's company in bad order, you put the lieutenant under arrest."

"Certainly, Sir. The complement of men, the arms, and the description of men, are the captain's business; but the order, the cleanliness, and the regulations are the lieutenant's especial duty. The company was deficient in these respects only, and it was that officer I punished. But, Sir, I did not fancy myself of such consequence; I should scarcely have imagined that the king's minister watched my actions so closely. I shall know, however, who gives you such correct information, or on my return, I will have every man of them put to the rack!"

The minister could not now refrain from laughing, and told him to go into the office and get the commission of his major despatched. He there learned that a letter, giving an account of these circumstances, was signed by four captains, and written in the handwriting of one of them, M. Fise. On his return to his regiment, he sent for them, related the fact, and advised them to lose no time in having business to require their presence elsewhere, assuring them, that if they dared appear under arms, he would have them ignominiously driven from the field of battle. They

knew he was a man of his word, and immediately submitted. The war having broken out a short time after, these four gentlemen were sent back to him, each commanding a company in a new battalion added to his regiment; but as they were going to embark for Italy, he intimated to them in so earnest a manner, that if they were bold enough to accompany the regiment, he would have them shot on the very first opportunity, that three of them again left the corps. One, named Desaulnais, alone remained: he was then ill, and it appeared that he afterwards got into favour with his colonel, for when my father entered the regiment, this officer was lieutenant-colonel.

This La Javellière, the subject of so much dispute, plain in appearance and of the most unprepossessing manners, was nevertheless a man of great merit. During the wars in Italy, he gained the rank of major-general of infantry. He was adjutant-general of the army under Marshal Berwick, and my father found him governor of Philipsburgh.

Thus, the regiment of this extraordinary man seemed animated, as it were, by one spirit, and composed of one body, which the colonel directed at his will. Adored by his men*, whose respect he com-

* I remember, in 1742, that, following a detachment of volunteers, and riding by the side of the columns, I overheard an old soldier say, "Do you see those red facings? he belongs to the

manded, as a thunderbolt that they were sure to find at their head on every occasion, he was feared by his officers, whom his inordinate natural pride kept at too great a distance, unless their merit, their conduct, or their services made him unbend in their favour. Devoted to the interests of his subordinates, a zealous patron, and an active guardian, he obtained for them all he desired, because he never asked favours for himself, and never relaxed in his exertions, nor gave up his point. He shielded them against all vexatious details, for no commissioner would have dared to count after him, or review in any other manner than by simply walking with him in front of the regiment drawn up in line of battle. He always evinced an air of confidence which flattered the inspecting officer—so much were even his superiors subjugated by the loftiness which nature had imprinted upon all his actions. But, independently of the influence he thus exercised in favour of his men, he was their support in all their private affairs, and although at a distance, he was their solicitor before every species of tribunal. These particulars are not exaggerated: they are attested by all his contemporaries, and confirmed by the incredible respect, the universal ascendency he enjoyed. He who was merely on a level with so many others, by birth, military rank,

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Mirabeaus;—they are all devils."—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

and fortune, never allowed his natural superiority to be questioned. He risked every thing, and carried every thing before him. In seeking the causes of this, I think I have remarked that a sonorous name, (a real advantage, according to Montagne,) successively borne by men of distinguished merit, although of different characters,—a constant daring, an imperious but generous loftiness always in unison with their conduct and habits,—an imposing exterior, and all the virtues belonging to magnanimity, form an assemblage of advantages which it is difficult for the mass of mankind not to look up to with awe and obedience, when these heroic qualities are animated by a superior mind, acting with strict justice. My father, born ten years after the period I shall soon speak of, which my grandfather called "THE DAY ON WHICH I WAS KILLED," only saw him when he was weighed down by age, and by those dreadful wounds which had the effect of entirely changing his temper, and in some degree mastered him. My father has, however, often told me, that his manners were noble and natural. He was kind and affable with the lower orders, full of attention and urbanity towards those he esteemed, and his pride, peculiar to himself, his gestures, his look, and the very sound of his voice, could be felt, but never described.

At the peace which took place towards the close of the last century, my grandfather returned home in

consequence of his mother's death. He performed, on this occasion, the journey from Tarare to Marseilles in twenty-four hours. Postchaises were then unknown, and some idea may therefore be formed, by the rapidity of this journey, of the energy of his disposition. On his arrival, he found his mother dead; she had made him her heir. He proposed to his brother Hannibal to marry, promising that he himself would renounce all idea of matrimony, so much was his mind at that period absorbed by the wish of obtaining military renown. He had, in fact, refused several alliances, and among others, the daughter of Marshal d'Humières, who entertained a lively affection for him, and to whom the king afterwards granted the privilege of entailing her title upon her son-in-law, provided he took her name. The Chevalier Mirabeau did not appear more desirous than his brother of becoming the father of a family.

The war now broke out again, and my grandfather was ordered to Italy with his regiment, to which another battalion was added. He joined it, together with the Duke of Lesdiguières, his intimate friend, who died in that fatal country. This nobleman was the last duke of the name, and at the same time the last heir to the immense fortune which the celebrated marshal and constable had amassed. Noble, generous, and one of the first noblemen in France, this Duke of Lesdiguières had the same order in his affairs that most great lords have.

He possessed the estate of La Tour d'Aigues, one of the most magnificent residences in the kingdom, and contiguous to Mirabeau. It was afterwards sold by the Villeroi family to Bruni, the banker, for the sum of one million of livres. Lesdiguières was aware how much this property suited my grandfather, and wished to dispose of it to him for 400,000 francs. My grandfather was obstinate in his refusal of this offer, declaring he would never receive any indirect present, nor take advantage of such proffered bargain, especially from a friend. This estate, united to that of Mirabeau, would have formed one of the finest private properties in Europe.

My grandfather returned from Italy mutilated by wounds, which forced him to quit his favourite profession. He had always lived in great splendour; his military rank and the ruinous state of the times necessitated his doing so, and he thereby greatly impaired his fortune. But he did this with the most extraordinary order and method *.

* The expenses of his table were regulated with a foresight that might serve as an example to the army. At the opening of the campaign he placed in the hands of his major one hundred pistoles, or a thousand francs, for that purpose, and 1,500 livres for each of the last months, at which time the funds of almost all the other officers becoming deficient, his expenses were so much the more useful and honourable. Whatever were his private wants, he never allowed himself to touch these funds, which he looked upon as a sacred deposit. This judicious and noble conduct, and, above all, his uni-

M. de Barbezieux, the war minister, died a short time prior to this period *, and the king had not yet appointed his successor. Louis XIV had found Letellier at the head of the war department, and this minister had left the office to his son, Louvois, who, with great detriment to the interests both of the kingdom and of his master, rendered this department the most important of the state. His son Barbezieux also inherited the ministry, and upon the death of the latter, when it became necessary to make a choice, the king, who thought he had formed Louvois, when young, and also his son, when merely a child, appointed Chamillard to the vacant office. This Chamillard, a limb of the law, to whom the king had taken a fancy, was not altogether deficient in probity and docility, but had not the slightest capacity for office. From this period every thing was neglected: there was no plan, no order, no rule of conduct. An enormous increase took place in the army, and distant expeditions were ordered. The military stores, the hospitals and the depôts were everywhere robbed and plundered. There was universal dilapidation in all branches of the army, and Chamillard, with-

versally admitted disinterestedness and unbounded generosity, distinguished him in those days of absolute degeneracy as much as his ardour, intrepidity, and talents, in a country where the war was carried on by infantry alone.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* 1701.—*Editor.*

out energy or talent, burthened with the administration of the finances, which were entirely exhausted, could accomplish nothing, and prevent nothing. He did little more than sign whatever was required of him. The authority of office, which has increased so much since that period, became more imperious in proportion as it was less respected. My grandfather was not of a temper to acknowledge such authority. Of an inflexible disposition at all times, he became still more so as he acquired knowledge and fame, and felt his own strength. The men in office, who represented the minister, or spoke in his name, had more than one quarrel with him, and endeavoured to annoy him. He affected the utmost contempt for the minister and his officials, and henceforward addressed all his memorials to the king, always following his own decisive and unbending will.

He had, for instance, demanded commissions of sub-lieutenant for thirteen cadets, whom he had brought with him. He was told that the king disliked these cadets, and wished to have but a small number of officers in his regiments, who had risen from the ranks. This piece of affectation was the more out of season because we were then at war, and was really injurious to the nation, even before it became so by its consequences. Our army, deprived of every thing in foreign countries, experienced a daily diminution. The troops were increased by the formation of new regiments

carried to a discouraging and ridiculous excess. These new corps were at last termed "sallad regiments," and were sold for a certain number of rations of bread. The king, with a nominal army of 500,000 men, had not in reality even half that number of effective troops. The general officers and colonels became plunderers, especially in Italy, where the country was rich, the quarters distant from the centre of command, and the sovereigns weak, suspected, and held in very little estimation. The colonels, in connivance with the king's commissioners, received the pay of the vacancies among the officers without filling them up. While all this abuse was going on, and every barefooted ragamuffin was a captain, a few commissions of sub-lieutenant were refused to a meritorious officer, desirous of completing his regiment with men deserving of confidence. But my grandfather, on receiving the courtly letter which put a negative upon his demand, assembled his regiment, and appointed the thirteen cadets to the rank he had intended to confer upon them. He then wrote to the minister, that when he took charge of those young men, he had promised their families that they should die officers, and as he exposed them to be killed every day, he had not thought proper to wait for the arrival of their commissions; that he had admitted them as officers in his regiment, and their commissions might be sent as soon as convenient.

My grandfather, indeed, spared neither himself nor his followers *. In the Milanese, the Lodisan, the Mantuan, and the Cremonese, which became the theatre of the war, he was continually attacking the enemy's posts, country houses, and canals. He not only asked and obtained permission to attack upon every occasion, but he likewise accompanied his brother officers and their detachments, and, among the rest, his intimate friend, the Marquis of Morangié, who was always wounded at the first fire, whilst my grandfather escaped scathless. The soldiers had tenfold ardour when they saw this intrepid leader at their head, imposing, sparing of human blood, though his own had never flowed, and under whom they fancied themselves invincible. Nobody, in fact, could be more brilliant in a campaign. He displayed the liveliness peculiar to the French character, united with the noble pride of a hero; and if during the heat of the fire it was requisite to maintain a firm footing, he made his men lie on the ground, and he

* His valorous ardour did not nevertheless exclude that prudence, which is not only compatible with duty, but even forms part of it. He used to say to me that in battle it was essential not to expose oneself unnecessarily or from mere bravado.

"You will see none do so," he said, "but young men anxious to get wounded. I have seen several killed at the very first onset, or maimed for life, without the slightest necessity. A man who reasons prizes his life and blood, and reserves the sacrifice of them for occasions where his honour or duty may require it."—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

alone, with his commanding stature, watched the enemy's motions. In a charge, he strictly forbade any one to precede him, and was equally severe in his admonition of never striking an enemy in the back, or sparing one face to face. When a post was attacked, in one hand he carried an axe to cut down the chevaux de frize, in the other a truss of blazing straw, to intimidate by fire and sword. If the enemy made a signal of surrender, he was no longer a foe, and the name of *comrade*, which my grandfather bestowed upon those soldiers he wished to honour and delight (for on ordinary occasions he asserted that the title of soldier was the most honourable of any), became the word of protection and safety. He was soon as much respected by the enemy as in our own army. This was evident when they found him on the field of battle, where he had been left for dead: he was instantly sent back, together with seventeen officers of his regiment, taken at the same time.

With regard to his superiority upon certain occasions, there exists a very honourable testimony of it in a saying of the Duke of Vendome, which shows the character of this celebrated general, as well as that of the man whom he deigned to call his right hand. The Duke one day said, when surrounded by his staff—

"Mirabeau is very tall!"

"Yes, my Lord," some one replied, "he is up-

wards of six feet high."—"Ah," returned the hero, "he is very great in the field of battle!*" Is it surprising that the hearts of the brave should have been more devoted to this general than to themselves? My grandfather loved him with an affection bordering upon superstition.

The latter was, however, a greater disciplinarian than his indulgent general. It may be well imagined, that the privileges of the churches and monasteries did not receive any very great support from a man of his character. Having learnt that they had begun to take an undue advantage of their privileges, he sent word to the monks not to go too far, as he should certainly seize his deserters, even in their houses. Notwithstanding this intimation, the Cordeliers harboured some deserters. My grandfather made his men fall in, and marched them to the church. The gates were closed.

"Grenadiers," said he, "axe in hand!" The men obeyed. No sooner had they struck the first blows than the doors were opened, and showed the cohort of monks *in pontificalibus*, with one bearing the Host at their head.

"Dauphin," said my grandfather, turning to his major, "call the chaplain of the regiment, and let him

* The double meaning of the Duke's expression is lost in English. In French the word *grand* signifies both *great* and *tall*.—*Tr.*

take the Host from the hands of that fellow *." This resolution put the procession to flight. He proceeded onwards, seized the deserters from behind the great altar, and had them shot before the church door. Although this took place in a friendly country, the

* The Marquis of Mirabeau, in his unpublished Memoirs, expresses himself as follows respecting this anecdote:—

"It would be wrong to suppose that this military mode of proceeding had the slightest tinge of irreligion. Calculating and philosophic impiety was not yet in vogue, and this feeling has pervaded the military character only to degrade it. In my time even the veterans of the army spurned those who reasoned for or against, saying that religion was not a proper subject for discourse. There were no philosophers in the army at that period; all the 'strong minded,' or, as La Bruyère calls them, the 'weak minded,' were at Paris, in the circles *à la Ninon*, and similar ones. The impiously debauched were of course known, for there are always some amid war and disorder. My father, though a jovial companion in his youth, was far from being tainted with this vice. I have heard him relate, that during his stay at Mirabeau, occasioned by some repairs which his château was undergoing (1702, John Anthony was then thirty-six years of age), our plantation caught fire: as the conflagration was dreadful, he caused the Host to be brought out, and the flames immediately recoiled upon themselves."

We read in another part of these memoirs—"He had always been religiously inclined: for instance, after he was wounded, which occurred on Lady-day (he received fifteen wounds on the same day), he every year periodically devoted that day to prayer, in gratitude for his escape, which certainly was miraculous. Age, the habit of frequenting those who set good examples, and setting a good example himself, had increased this disposition, but in the manner of Bayard. With such people the man of honour was a Christian, as a matter of course. One would no more have thought of hazarding philosophical trifling in their presence than of giving them the lie. Such a thought never entered anybody's head."—*Editor.*

customs of which were respected because it belonged to the Spanish crown, care was afterwards taken to afford no asylum to French deserters.

At the very first campaign, he exposed himself so much, that his first battalion, completely decimated, was unable to continue in active service, and remained in garrison. But he was allowed to serve at the head of the second. He was proceeding to join the army with this battalion, when he received an order from the Prince of Vaudemont, governor of the Milanese, to deviate from his route, and repair to a neighbouring village. He soon learnt that the object of this interruption was to serve as a guard to the King of Spain, who that year visited Italy, and was to sleep at the village that night. The king arrived shortly after, with his Spanish court, and the general officers of both nations. In the evening, my grandfather presented himself to receive the watch-word, and the Duke of Medina advanced to give it to him. After having, in the most marked manner, pretended not to hear, he suddenly drew himself up, and declared, that as the King of France honoured the colonels who waited upon him by giving them the watch-word in person, he would, in this instance, receive it from nobody but his Catholic Majesty. The Spanish court was immediately thrown into confusion. It is well known how tenaciously observant this nation is of etiquette, and the young king had received particular recom-

mendations strictly to observe Spanish forms and manners. Of all the instructions he had received, he bore this most in mind, and on several occasions it had proved of the greatest service to him. The whole court opposed any departure from the established forms, which, in this instance, they considered derogatory; and the colonel became the object of the most pressing solicitations. Generals, ministers, every one, in short, begged him, as an especial favour, to forego his pretension. He replied, that he was prepared to do any thing except allowing the rank which his sovereign had bestowed upon him to be dishonoured in his person. They stated to him the strict and repeated instructions given to avoid every thing that could in the remotest degree excite the displeasure of the Spaniards; they pointed out to him the consequences of a quarrel arising out of a mere question of precedence; the suspected provinces, the two kingdoms shaken. He assured them, that they imputed to him three times greater political views than his head could carry, and that he went no further than this: that the king should give him the watch-word in person, or that he would receive none. Several officers present, who knew him, stated that his character was most inflexible, and the Spanish ministers at length chose the plan of forgetting to give the word. He perceived it, and having asked twice in a loud voice, "if there was no watch-word," and observing every one hang

down his head, he withdrew from the apartment, and gave the command: "Drummers! recall!" All the kings in the universe would not have prevented his regiment from obeying him when he was at its head. He relieved the guard, and continued his march. The Senators became as much agitated as if all the hussars of Hungary were there. They called him back, and Philippo Quinto whispered in his ear, "Saint Ambrose and Milan." When tranquillity was restored, he told the general officers that if they had sent him back to his staff, which was his proper place, the commander of his battalion, remaining alone, might have received the watch-word from a valet de chambre, if he had liked. On the following day, the king, perceiving him on his passage, turned his back upon him, but the Spaniards were henceforward convinced that it was useless to attempt forcing such a man.

My grandfather was present at the battles of Chiari* and Luzara,† and was at Mantua during the famous siege of that city. That protracted siege gave occasion to a succession of encounters. Sorties were every day made in order to procure ammunition, forage, and provisions, attack the enemy's posts and create diversions. He everywhere distinguished himself, and particularly at the most important of these actions, called the battle of St. Anthony.‡ He commenced the attack at the

* 1701.—*Editor.* † 1702.—*Editor.*

‡ 1703.—*Editor.*

head of twelve companies of grenadiers, and found himself opposed to almost a whole army. He maintained his footing, and gave Marshal Tessé, who commanded in the town, time to come up with the élite of the troops*.

My father has heard the generals of that period say, that nothing could be more striking than to see a man of his commanding stature upon one of those heaps of turf raised in that country to be afterwards used as

* We here relate an anecdote of which Mirabeau had no knowledge, and which will add to the interest inspired by this singular and chivalrous character.

"As I find a pleasure in talking to you, I must relate a fact which I heard the other day. The count of Cologon stated that he was told by Marshal de la Fare, then very young, and colonel of the regiment of Gâtinois, at that time in Italy, that after a brilliant but sanguinary engagement, where my father's regiment was cut to pieces, and he had his clothes pierced with balls, the whole regiment with the colours were returning to Cremona upon a single waggon. My father was received like a hero by Marshal Tessé and the army. A brother of M. Chamillard, who was Maréchal de Camp, said to him—

"'I promise you, Sir, that I will give a good account of this to my brother.'

"This devil of a man looked at him and replied: 'Your brother, Sir, is very happy in possessing you, for without you he would be the greatest fool in the kingdom.' The good man Cologon added: 'A promotion then took place, and he was not included.' I own I should not have thought, that in my sixty-sixth year I should learn any new fact respecting those of our family who have preceded us."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, 5th Jan.* 1781.

We have copied the name "Cologon" as it is written in the autograph letter, according to the vicious pronunciation of the time: the real name was probably "Coetlogon."—*Editor.*

fuel. He appeared at a distance like a steeple, and exposing himself, of his own accord, to the constant firing of four thousand men, coolly examined the position of the enemy, whilst his troops were ordered to lie flat on the ground. The advantage remained with us, and the Duke of Mantua, like a true Italian, came to the gates of his city to witness the entrance of the victorious army. As my grandfather received many encomiums upon his conduct, the duke conceived a perfect enthusiasm for him; and the following day at the play, he called him into his box, and told him that he was about to write to the king, and would beg, as a favour, that his majesty would promote him to the rank of brigadier. My grandfather entreated the duke not to do so, being unwilling to expose himself to the reproach of owing his promotion to favour. I do not know whether he did not afterwards acknowledge that this act of disinterestedness was rather exaggerated for the times in which he lived; but my father speaking to him about it one day, as having heard the circumstance from the Marquis of Leuville, he merely said—

"It is true; and if I had been made a brigadier at that period, I should have become a lieutenant-general when I was made brigadier."

Meanwhile, our affairs took an unfortunate turn in Italy. Marshal Catinat, as it is well known, had merely made his appearance at the army. His name reminds me of an anecdote which I have heard my father

relate, having heard it from his father, who had afterwards become acquainted with that great man, for whom he entertained a profound veneration. My grandfather went one day to M. de Saint Pouange's office, and not finding him there, addressed a clerk seated at a desk in the front closet, saying, that it was perhaps the tenth time he had been there to speak about some business, mentioning its nature. The clerk replied that he knew not whether it had been done.

"Look in your books," replied the imperious soldier; "you ought not to be so ignorant." At these words the man put on his spectacles, took down an immense folio from a book-case behind him, turned over the leaves with care, and then informed my grandfather that he could find no trace of the business being in progress. My grandfather turned his back to him, and muttering some *a parte*, expressive of his impatience, left the office, and going down stairs, met M. de Saint Pouange, who had just returned. What was his astonishment, when returning to the office, he heard M. de Saint Pouange exclaim to the supposed clerk—

"Good heavens! Marshal, are you here? And you are good enough to wait for me." Confused at this unexpected circumstance, he asked a neighbour what it meant. He now learnt that it was Marshal Catinat who had thus allowed himself, in jest, to be treated like a clerk, accused and scorned for his negligence. This

philosophical specimen of the virtuous pride of a great man deserves to be recorded.

This great general did not suit the Duke of Savoy, who betrayed us, and whom he had kept in check and beaten during the preceding war. After him, Marshal Villeroi came to display his incapacity, and fortunately allowed himself to be taken at Cremona. At length the Duke of Vendome appeared, a hero truly French, both by his conduct and the qualities of his heart. Adored by his army, but negligent and unequal, he was always certain of repairing his mistakes with the superiority of a great mind, and with a brilliancy of action that gave them the character of the greatest exploits. This prince, whose morals were undoubtedly too relaxed, but who was truly worthy of being beloved for his benevolence and winning manners, had the fault of too highly prizing military valour, which, in his opinion, comprehended everything. It may easily be conceived what a man like my grandfather, brave, irreproachable, and of high talent, must have been in his eyes. The duke found in him every good quality: sense, daring, activity, unparalleled intrepidity, an indefatigable soul—in short, the nature, the science, and the genius of the profession. He attached him to his person in a manner that still further spoiled my grandfather. He gave him constant employment, answered for him, overlooked all his follies, had not the courage to condemn him in anything, was his only moderator, and, after some freak, would say to him—

"Neither you nor I shall ever make our fortune; but with a small number of such men as you, I would answer for the fortunes of France." Those who had any difficulty with the impetuous colonel, applied invariably to the Duke of Vendome.

The lieutenant of the *colonelle* *, to whom my grandfather abandoned the whole of his pay and emoluments as colonel, on condition of keeping his company in perfect order, came to him one day to inform him that a stoppage had been made from his pay for the capitation tax. He learnt that it was by order of the commissary general, M. d'Andrezel, who fulfilled the duties of intendant of the army. He immediately ordered the corporal at his door to go with four fusiliers to head-quarters, and take from the stables of the intendant a beautiful piebald horse, which he knew that functionary possessed, and bring it to him. His order was punctually obeyed. The astonished intendant wanted to draw up a *procès verbal* of the proceeding, but was advised not to expose himself against so terrible an adversary, but to complain to the Duke of Vendome. The prince could not refrain from laughing on listening to his sad tale, and promised to arrange the matter. He sent for my grandfather and asked him the cause of this act of hostility.

"My lord!" he replied, "M. Picon d'Andrezel has

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* The company commanded by the Colonel. – *Editor.*

a pen and offices wherewith and wherein he makes out orders. He has stopped from my pay a capitation-tax, which I do not owe, since I pay it at home. I have at my orders some fusiliers, by whose means I have obtained the piebald horse taken from him, which is certainly a good equivalent for my capitation money, and worth more. We each of us use our peculiar weapons; it is the right of war, and if he does not find it to his taste, we will proceed no further."

The duke experienced no difficulty in extracting his promise, that if the capitation money was returned, the intendant's palfrey should also be restored to him. He wished to make them dine together with him.

"No, prince," replied my grandfather, "I cannot."

When asked the reason: "I cannot," said he, "dine with a man who may be some day hanged for peculation."

The thing passed off as a joke, but such was not the case with a more serious affair, which the Duke of Vendome could not succeed in arranging.

The Marquis of Créqui, a general officer of great reputation and merit, but proud and ambitious, was at that time director-general of the infantry. He obtained an order from the king, directing all the colonels of infantry to forward, in future, the accounts of their respective regiments through him. He transmitted this order to the majors, that they might notify it to the colonels. My grandfather received his major very ill,

and even refused to believe in the authenticity of the order. But the fact did not long remain doubtful, and my grandfather's opinion upon the subject was also very soon known. One of the reasons why he was so much feared, was the peremptory manner in which he expressed his opinions. Indignant at this innovation, and particularly displeased at not having been thought deserving of a private communication, or at least of some preparatory intimation, he resolved to die rather than submit. He complained so loudly, expressed his feelings in such unqualified terms, and in the most military manner, with regard to those who were dastardly enough to degrade their rank by submitting to the innovation, that he excited an almost general insurrection. The Duke of Vendome was not with his army, and the matter remained undecided until his return, when it was to be settled. Immediately on his arrival, the director-general and the officers waited upon him, and the Marquis of Créqui politely accosting my grandfather, complained to him of his not having condescended to enter into an explanation with him, adding, that had he done so, he (the Marquis) would have felt great satisfaction in assuring him that the orders were not meant for him, nor for those who served like him. The Marquis of Créqui added, that on the other hand, my grandfather must admit that most of the colonels robbed their regiments, allowed the vacancies of officers to remain unfilled, and committed or allowed a

thousand other abuses which could only be repressed on the spot, and by the most vigilant authority.

My grandfather entertained the highest respect for the Marquis of Créqui, who was a lieutenant-general, distinguished alike by his birth, reputation, talents, and valour. He replied, that he should always be disposed to make the first step towards him, whenever they met upon equal terms; but that as long as he lived he would not know what it was to give up an acquired right. Besides, it was not for him to pretend to any distinction above his brother officers. The Marquis of Créqui observed, that they might all of them look for that respect which a man like him could not fail to show, and that he did not see how it could be derogatory to them to have him for their interpreter instead of a chief clerk.

"Let us cut the matter short," said my grandfather; "if, when you were colonel, and M. de la Chétardie an *apostle*, he had called upon you to give him your accounts, what would you have done?"

The Marquis of Créqui, annoyed by the comparison, replied that "all men were not alike."

"I admit of no distinction, Sir," said my grandfather; "the king may deprive me of my rank, but he cannot force me to give you my accounts."

They then entered the duke's closet; he repeated the same thing to his general in presence of all the staff. The duke, seeing that it would be necessary

either to act in opposition to superior orders, or to give cause for a general insurrection of the infantry, told them to apply to the court for a decision upon the question. My grandfather wrote immediately, and showed himself quite prepared to abide by the consequences of his resistance. The answer of the court was, that the order did not apply to him, nor to those who served as he did, and that he might forward his accounts directly. This clearly signified that the order was meant for nobody, and the infantry was thus preserved, during his time, from that species of degradation.

This haughtiness of character was not, however, altogether unjustifiable. My grandfather daily became more distinguished in his military career. He had an attack of quartan ague, which lasted four years. He has mentioned, on this occasion, a circumstance which occurred to him at Milan. Being in company with some ladies who were having their fortunes told, the sibyl, without his having spoken a word to her, said to him—

" You have got the quartan ague, you will get cured, but the remedy will be worse than the disease."

And indeed when he " was killed," as he expressed himself, at the dreadful battle where he received so many wounds, he was cured of his fever. This illness never made him lose a single day. The regimen he followed was always a little too much in accordance with his will, his strength, and his impatience; he always

carried about him his bottle of Peruvian bark, in the trenches, in action, and on a march. He would go a little in advance, and when the fit came on, place himself behind some bush. My father, who, after him, served in the same regiment, has heard old officers relate that they stood in awe of him, whether absent or present. Indeed, concealed behind his bush, he watched his regiment marching, and, as he knew the exact number of each company, if a single man was missing, he would call the lieutenant, and if the latter could not account for the absence of his man, he would say to him—

"Go, and search for your man, and do not make your appearance without him."

In the ensuing winter, he was left in command at Desinsano, a town situated near the lake of Garda, on the borders of, or perhaps comprised within, the Venetian states. Although this post was very near the openings of the Tyrolese mountains, and consequently greatly exposed to insults from the enemy, such was the confidence which his intrepidity and vigilance inspired, that a depôt, a storehouse, and an hospital were established there. It was here, and under his command, that Marshal Belle-Isle made his first campaign. This general has often said to my father and uncle, in presence of the whole court, that he was proud in having studied his profession under one of the most distinguished officers in Europe.

It may well be conceived, that in such a place the curfew bell was ordered to be rung early, and that the commandant kept watch for all. A little after eleven o'clock one night, the alarm bell was heard: the great hospital was on fire. My grandfather instantly rushed to the spot, muffled up in his cloak. On entering the building, a man well powdered, in full dress, and quite composed, came towards him, saying—

"Ah! Marquis, what a misfortune!"

"Who is that man?" exclaimed my grandfather.

He was informed that it was the director of the hospital.

"Let him be arrested, and placed in safe custody," said my stern grandfather. He then proceeded to the thickest of the fire, which was raging everywhere. The drums beat to arms, the troops instantly assembled, and maintained all possible order both within and without the building. But in order to save the principal part of the hospital, it became necessary to pull down some portion of it, so as to separate it from the wing on fire, containing two thousand patients. What an agony for a commander so strongly attached to his soldiers!

"Ah! gentlemen," said he, next day, to the assembled officers, "how often must we remind ourselves that another would have done worse in our place, for our hearts to be able to bear up against the frightfully necessary acts incidental to our career." The feelings of humanity which are found in a strong and lofty

mind, which despises dangers, are the best lessons that example can procure.

With regard to the director, my grandfather had formed his judgment of him at the very first glance. He said to himself—

"I was certainly the first up. I am always the quickest in case of alarm, and I must be so where I have the command. When, however, I came to the place threatened with danger, I found a man full dressed, calm, and composed. This man could not have been in bed, and yet every one ought to have retired two hours before. He must then have expected this accident. As he did not prevent it, he is most probably the author of it, with a view of burning his accounts; and giving up to the flames some supposed stores of drugs and linen, which in reality do not exist."

Nor was he mistaken. It appeared from the information taken on the spot, that this man had been seen lurking and hiding things with precaution. In short, his conduct furnished all the indications which come to light on such occasions, when a diligent search is made. He was taken to head quarters, loaded with irons, and thence conveyed to France, together with all the evidence against him. He was heard no more of, but those kind of people have too many accomplices not to escape, especially during a time of disorder and plunder *.

* During the war of 1733, my uncle, the Bailli of Mirabeau, met with an old priest at Desinsano, who, with some of the older in-

I am not certain whether it was at the same place that he occupied the palace of a noble Venetian, which had been left entirely furnished. Some general officers dining with him one day, one of them asked him what he intended to do with the pictures when he left the palace. My grandfather replied, that having found them there, he should leave them there.

"In that case," returned the officer, "I will take charge of them."

My grandfather immediately warned the proprietor, and advised him to remove them, and also a quantity of plate, which his servants had found concealed in the roof. The *Monsignor* wished to present the servants with a hundred ducats, but as their master had accustomed them to take nothing, which practice continued in his establishment during his life-time, they sent back the money. This circumstance appeared to me little worthy of remark, when related to me, but it really was so, considering the period, and the country where it occurred, for every body else plundered without shame or scruple. What took place in Westphalia is a sufficient proof that this species of meanness does not yield to the influence of a growing civilization *.

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habitants of the place, showed him all sorts of attention, in honour of the memory of his father, whom they perfectly recollected.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* This is in allusion to the extortions with which the French

On the return of the season, the war was carried on with renewed vigour. My grandfather then received a warning, which, far from making him believe that he was not invulnerable, confirmed him in the idea of his great good fortune in this respect.

He was in the trenches at the siege of a town, the name of which I have forgotten. On visiting the works of the miners, he found the men benumbed with cold. Desirous of animating them, he advanced, according to his usual custom, without the least regard to his personal safety, in the most exposed situations, which, especially for a man of his stature, was perilous in the extreme. He received a shot on his breast which took away his breath. His great-coat had but three buttons, all buttoned, and the ball struck exactly on one of them. It fell quite flattened, but left a dreadful contusion. He now relied more than ever upon his lucky star; but war, according to Marshal de Grammont, is like the game of faro—"Wait, only, and I will catch thee;" and

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generals were charged during the seven years' war, especially the Duke of Richelieu.

"During my journey in 1730 my father made me come twice to his bed-side, and, for the first time, did me the honour to address to me a direct recommendation: this was never to take anything during the campaign, nor to think that anything of the enemy's belonged to me. I can assert, with regard to this recommendation, that I did not stand in need of it. Indeed, I have not, during my time, seen many examples of this mean vice, which in my father's time was very prevalent in Italy."—*Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

indeed my grandfather paid on one single occasion the price of his long impunity.

We have already stated that we do not possess any regular particulars of the various exploits of this high-minded man, who discoursed excellently upon warfare, but never spoke of himself. He was, however, so shattered with gunshot wounds, that it was impossible for his children not to know that, at the celebrated battle of Cassano, he "was killed," according to his own expression, and even that of his contemporaries. Sixty years after, the old Marquis of Bissy, being in company with my grandmother at the house of his sister-in-law, Madame de Castellane, said to her that he had formerly known a person of her name, who was killed in Italy, in 1705; and although she assured him that she had married the very person since that period, and that he lived thirty-two years after, he never would credit her assertion.

This affair of Cassano was preceded for my grandfather, by one of those great actions which decide the fate of a campaign. The Duke of Vendome did not appreciate at their true worth the talents of Prince Eugene as a commander.

"He has nothing but cunning and conceit," said he, "and Staremberg is superior to him."

This cunning man nevertheless obtained some advantages over the French hero, which the admirable coup-d'œil of the latter repaired with a boldness that

always gave him a sort of superiority over his rival. On the occasion of which I speak, our general had placed too much reliance upon his brother, the grand prior, who commanded the main body of the army. On a sudden, the duke received intelligence that Prince Eugene had gained, by surprise, two forced marches, and was about to throw a bridge over the Adda. From the impossibility of arriving in time to prevent the passage, the best thing to be done was to despatch an express to his brother, with orders to proceed instantly to the spot, preceded by a body of light troops sent forward with all possible haste. But he was aware of the dilatory character of his brother, who, on this account, was sometimes accused of being jealous of the duke's reputation. In this perplexity, Vendome sent for my grandfather, and told him that he would give the world if a detachment could arrive in time to thwart Prince Eugene's measures, adding that the preservation of the Milanese depended upon this passage. My grandfather requested to have the grenadiers of the division. Thirty companies were confided to him. It was at first intended to make the cavalry carry them, each horseman taking a foot soldier behind him; but there was no cavalry at hand, and besides, infantry soldiers, full of confidence, and properly led, surmount every obstacle, whilst the horseman is frequently obliged to make a circuitous route, in a country intersected with ditches. My grandfather had a perfect

knowledge of that part of Italy. The march to be performed by his detachment was nothing less than thirty-six leagues in twenty-four hours. He set off with the firm resolution of overcoming even impossibilities, and informed his men that the safety of the Milanese was at stake, as the passage of the Adda would make the enemy instantly master of it, and, at the same time, endanger Vendome's reputation. All the soldiers marched forward, at the word of their beloved commander, with inconceivable zeal and alacrity. Montluc was perfectly right, when he said that the strength of a horse is more easily exhausted than that of a man, and that a jaded horse cannot be made to proceed further, but a man, apparently exhausted, may, by the influence of glory or the hope of booty, begin his task again, and set out anew, as if perfectly refreshed. My grandfather only allowed his troops to halt once to take food. During the halt, he caused the provisions which were found upon the spot to be distributed among his men. There was not sufficient wine for some companies, and it would have been necessary to have fetched it from distant villages.

" My friends," said my grandfather, " the honour of our general is at stake, and we must justify the confidence placed in us. Time presses hard. I have two hundred Louis in my pocket, they shall belong to those companies which have not been able to feed. Will you have them?"

" Yes, Colonel," exclaimed the grenadiers; " your property is ours, our blood is yours; let the survivors enjoy the wages, and he who lags behind be hanged."

They all instantly rose, and marched forwards like fresh men. My grandfather accomplished his extraordinary task, and on his arrival, had the satisfaction to find that the enemy were only making their preparations. He immediately stationed his men, and relying upon some in whom he could place confidence, threw himself, perfectly exhausted, upon the ground, where he slept a few moments, with his portmanteau for a pillow. The day broke, and the morning salutation which awoke him, was a blow he received from the arm of a soldier, who had taken part of his pillow, and whose limb had just been shot off by the early cannonade of the enemy. All this noise, which did little harm, for the troops were lying in the thickets on the bank of the river, was the signal of the enemy's abandoning their project; and shortly after, as the day appeared, boats and planks were seen collected on the opposite bank, and some drifting down the stream.

My grandfather now waited for further orders. Vendome came up with great rapidity, and directed him to follow the course of the Adda, with his detachment, as Prince Eugene was pursuing the same movement on the opposite bank. Vendome's division soon joined the detachment, and marched towards the bridge at Cassano, where it was to cross

the Adda, and effect a junction with the main army, stationed a few miles further on in the plain, under the command of the grand prior. Vendome's division was little more than a large detachment of infantry. As it was hastening to cross the bridge of Cassano, Prince Eugene's army, which they did not think so near, was seen advancing directly towards the bridge.

Sixty-five thousand men, infantry and cavalry, with artillery in proportion, composed the enemy's force. The Duke of Vendome had only seventeen battalions of infantry, with neither cavalry nor cannon. All the rest of his division had remained behind, and the main army, though within hearing of the firing, remained stationary, and sent no assistance. Cadieu, alone, indignant at this inaction, quitted the army on a sudden, and advanced with his brigade, which only reached the scene of action a little before the issue of the battle *. It was in moments like these, when others would have given way to despair, that the resources of Vendome's genius made him appear a superior being. He was on the point of being cut off: he instantly ordered the troops to defile, the bridge to be cleared, throwing into the river the equipages which impeded the passage. He then chose the field of battle in the plain, and stationed the regiments as they arrived. At the bridge of Cassano my grandfather offered

* August 15th, 1705.—*Editor.*

violence to one of his best friends, in order to pass the first and precede him to the post of danger. He was at the head of the brigade of his regiment; the Marquis of Chaumont commanded the brigade of Auvergne. Both reached the foot of the bridge at the same time. Chaumont claimed precedence on the score of his brigade being the most ancient; my grandfather, seizing his pistols, passed on first. He mentioned this circumstance afterwards with much regret, as they never saw each other after. Almost every one was either killed or taken prisoner at this battle, and the Marquis of Chaumont, mortally wounded, asked what had become of his friend Mirabeau; he was told that he was killed. The Marquis, wrapping himself up in his cloak, laid himself down and expired.

The Ritorte, an inconsiderable rivulet, but deep and precipitously imbedded, falls into the Adda at Cassano, and flows in a circular direction through the plain. Vendome placed his troops, as they arrived, on the banks of this stream, in order to arrest Prince Eugene's progress. Towards the centre of the ground, which he was enabled to occupy, was a stone bridge, at the head of which were some mills. There had been no time to destroy this bridge, and Vendome stationed the Marquis of Guerchois with the grenadiers in the mills, and confided to my grandfather and his brigade the guard of the banks that led to the bridge.

Prince Eugene, always outgeneraled by the daring of his rival, whenever an opportunity occurred, suspended his march when he saw him advance, and formed his own army on the opposite bank. He had the advantages which the place afforded: his ground was more elevated, and covered with trees, whilst ours was lower and quite unsheltered. He formed his army in four lines, placed his batteries, and opened a murderous fire upon our battalions, whose position it became necessary to change. It was impossible for my grandfather to destroy the bridge; the attempt would have exposed his troops to be slaughtered, by attracting the attention of the enemy, who observed everything, and might have attacked him with a superior force. He contented himself with throwing some faggots and branches of trees upon the bridge, as if it had been destroyed. He then made his brigade lie down, and, according to his usual custom, placed himself on the other side to examine the manœuvres of the enemy, within range of a most dreadful fire, and almost within pistol shot.

For a long time the enemy thought the bridge destroyed; but at length an aide-de-camp of the Count of Linanges came to ascertain the fact, and though mortally wounded, succeeded in reaching his general, and informing him that the bridge was still entire. Prince Eugene, who had three times the number of troops that he could conveniently station on his ground,

immediately, without reducing the infantry of his lines, whose firing swept the plain, caused the mills to be attacked by a strong column, which carried off Guerchois and his grenadiers, freed the passage of the bridge, and cutting its way into the plain, through our centre, divided our little army.

My grandfather had foreseen this manœuvre. He did not commit the fault of presenting himself before a column strong enough to carry every thing before it, as was the case afterwards at Malplaquet, Fontenoi, &c. He allowed them to proceed forward, carried away by their ardour, and hurried on by those who followed them. When he saw them completely engaged, he made his troops rise, and placing himself at their head, attacked the enemy's flank, overthrew them, and pursued them beyond the bridge, which they recrossed in the utmost confusion. Having thus replaced things in their former situation, he returned to his post, and stationed his men under the same shelter as before. This manœuvre had been executed under a most galling and well directed fire from the double lines of the enemy, and the loss of men was very considerable. The Duke of Vendome hastening to the attack, found it already over, the whole line lying flat upon the ground, and the colossus on his feet. He ordered my grandfather to do as the others did, and not expose himself to be killed before the retreat. His faithful adherent exclaimed—

" I never expose myself but when it is necessary.

I am wanted here; but with regard to yourself, my lord, this is not your place. I answer for the post: leave this place, or else I will abandon you."

The prince then ordered him, in the name of the king, to come down from his station.

"Go to the devil, both you and the king, too," replied the impetuous officer; "I am doing my duty, go and perform yours."

The kind-hearted and generous prince yielded, and, in fact, the place was not tenable.

Very shortly after, my grandfather's right arm was shattered; but his spirit remained undaunted. He made a scarf of his handkerchief for the broken limb, and remained at his post, expecting another attack. When the moment arrived, he seized an axe with his left hand, and performing again the same manœuvre, defeated the enemy, and made them recross the bridge.

Here ill-fortune seemed to await him. While in the act of rallying his men, he received a musket shot, which cut the muscles of his neck and the jugular vein. He fell upon the bridge, and his brigade dispersed. M. de Montolieu, a knight of Malta, a man of rank from Provence, and my grandfather's kinsman, was wounded by his side. He instantly tore his shirt and those of others in order to stop the blood, but the intrepid Mirabeau was soon entirely senseless. An old serjeant, called Laprairie, begged of

the sub-major of the regiment, Gaudin, a Gascon, who had risen from the ranks, and owed every thing to his colonel, to help him in carrying his wounded commander from the bridge. Gaudin refused, saying, he was dead; and when it was afterwards known that Prince Eugene had sent my grandfather back, this officer did not dare to appear again in his brigade. In this situation, my grandfather served, as it were, as a footstool for crowds of the enemy, who hastened to avail themselves of his disaster. The cavalry crossed the bridge with great rapidity, following the infantry. Who would then have said that our branch could have sprung from this mutilated and abandoned body? Fortunately, the kind-hearted Laprairie covered his head with an iron kitchen pot; but notwithstanding this protection, it was severely wounded.

The Duke of Vendome perceiving his line broken, the enemy forming in the plain, and judging, of course, that the bridge had been carried, exclaimed—

"Ah! Mirabeau is dead!"

This flattering encomium, dear to our family, must never be forgotten. He immediately adopted a resolution worthy of a hero. He drew off his troops, rallied them, formed the chord of an arc, according to his original plan, advanced his left to the Adda at the bridge of Cassano, and his right to the rivulet, so that he left the enemy only a very limited field of battle. The intrepidity of the remnant of our battalions

prevented the enemy's numerous forces from deploying. Our battalions, though confusedly intermingled, still formed an impenetrable line. Vendome, seeing a great number of men who retired disheartened to the rear, near the bridge of Cassano, gaily placed himself at their head, recrossed the bridge, and then showed them that by throwing themselves into the houses and making battlements, they might keep up a fire that would greatly annoy the enemy's flank. They obeyed him with alacrity; the houses immediately appeared like batteries, and Prince Eugene having been wounded, ordered the Count of Linanges to conduct the retreat, himself setting the example. Thus a handful of men, animated by one determined will, can be led, and may gain what is called a victory over a numerous and well-disciplined army, headed by a general of the greatest talent *. The

* This account is so perfectly conformable to the details given by Feuquières (*Memoirs*, Paris, Rollin, 1740, vol. iv. pp. 7—16), that we may suppose Mirabeau made as much use of them as of his private documents. This is, however, not the case with Saint Simon's account (vol. iv. pp. 399, 400. of the edit. of 1829. Paris, Sautelet), an account totally incorrect, every page of which shows the animosity of the author against the Duke of Vendome. He also makes a mistake in the name of the Marquis John Anthony, whom he calls "Mirebaut."

This same field of battle of Cassano was, ninety-four years later, viz. April 27, 1799, the theatre of an engagement between the Russians and the French. The superiority of numbers of the former, commanded by Suwarrow, gave them the advantage over the French under General Moreau.—*Editor.*

number of killed and wounded was immense *. MM. d'Albergotti and de Saint-Pater, alone, among the colonels and general officers, escaped unhurt. Thirty-two officers belonging to the two battalions of my grandfather's regiment were killed or wounded. Fortunately for him, he wore on that day, according to his usual custom and the manner of the times, a very splendid dress, which served to distinguish him among the dead. He had been stripped, as a matter of course; but the enemy, finding some signs of life in him, carried him to head-quarters, and there threw him again among the heaps of dead. But it was not his fate to die. Villevieille, an officer of his regiment, who had been made prisoner, and was particularly attached to him, thought he knew the body. Having washed off the mud and blood by which it was disfigured, he recognised my grandfather, who showed signs of life. This faithful friend instantly acquainted Prince Eugene with the circumstance. The prince had known him in his youth, and besides, his reputation was great. Eugene gave orders that the greatest care should be taken of him, but as he learnt that an operation was urgent, and as in those times the German surgeons were forbidden to perform any, he sent him back immediately to the French army, without demand-

* Saint Simon mentions among the killed Messrs. de Chaumont, de Moriac, le Chevalier de Fourbin, de Vaudrey, and de Praslin.—*Editor.*

ing any ransom, and sent with him seventeen officers of his regiment.

Now commenced a period of suffering which continued for the remainder of the life of that hitherto powerful, and naturally impatient man. Dumoulin, who afterwards became the most celebrated physician of Paris, was then attached to the army. He performed an operation upon my grandfather, which all the faculty of Europe have constantly considered a phenomenon. Dumoulin, himself, fifty years after, spoke of it in that light. The dreadful musket shot had, as I have already mentioned, separated the jugular vein and nerves. The clotted blood had entirely stopped the bleeding, but this mass could not remain without causing putrefaction. It therefore became necessary to cut his throat, as it were, and introduce into the vessel rolls of lint, leaving nature to perform a miracle and heal herself. My grandfather had preserved all his presence of mind, and indulged in his customary jests. The surgeons conceived it their duty to inform him that if the blood flowed at the moment they removed the rolls of lint, he would be suffocated; and that in ten thousand cases of the kind, there was little probability of even one being successful. He laughed at them, made a kind of military will, and performed his duties as a Christian, asking the priest if he had not some little addition to make to his penance. He, however, afterwards owned to his wife,

that when it became necessary to remove the fatal roll, he looked anxiously at the surgeons, and seeing that they appeared satisfied with the result, he felt easy. There remained, nevertheless, a cruel task still to perform, for the nerves were wounded, shortened, and the bones almost crushed, &c. It was, probably, during these repeated dressings that he had a delirious fever. My father has heard him relate, as a proof of the blind and unbounded devotedness with which the Duke of Vendome knew how to inspire his officers, that during a fit of delirium, one of his whims was to refuse to void his water. His attendants hit upon the expedient of making a person unknown to him, and wearing the uniform of an aid-de-camp of his commanding officer, enter his chamber and order him, as from the Duke, to perform that function of nature. He immediately obeyed. In a word, his situation was such that he was thought dead, and his regiment given to M. de Narbonne, his lieutenant-colonel. The newspapers announced his demise, and his family went into mourning.

His only wish now was to return to France as soon as he could be removed; and he was thus spared the sight of the reverses which in the following campaign compelled us to evacuate Italy. He was obliged to be carried in a litter which still exists at Mirabeau. The expenses of such a journey, and the state he was in, together with his naturally violent, imperious, and im-

patient temper, may easily be imagined. Always self-willed, it was, of course, a difficult task to govern him. He could get no sleep, and he suffered the most excruciating pain. He was at last obliged to take eighty grains of opium every evening in order to sleep. The Barège waters, then recently discovered, effected his cure; and as his fortitude never forsook him, and, according to the polished manners of the times, people kept their ailings to themselves, he soon regained his good looks. He lost, however, the use of his right arm, but he had made a kind of ornament of the black scarf, in which he placed his shattered limb. He was also obliged to wear, for the remainder of his life, a silver collar, in order to keep up his head.

The Abbé Francis of Mirabeau, his uncle, died at this period; and as he had administered the affairs of his nephew in a very injudicious manner, the latter found his fortune, in consequence of so many campaigns and catastrophes, much impaired. This circumstance, however, had no effect upon him.

At that time, pecuniary favours were not lavished upon officers; and this custom, though temporarily resorted to under the regency, dates in reality only from M. d'Argenson's administration, that is, nearly forty years after the period I am now speaking of. A pension was, however, offered him of three thousand livres, in consideration of his services and wounds. He refused it, and wrote in answer that he

had never served but for honour; that although he had spent part of his fortune in the army, it was then the custom to do so, and he had still enough left to prevent him from becoming a burthen to the state. But he asked as an especial favour that this pension might be divided between six captains of his regiment, who had been wounded at the same time he had, and in such a manner as to be unable to follow their profession, which was their only resource. This was granted, and these unfortunate victims of a disastrous war would otherwise not have received the slightest remuneration in those times of pecuniary difficulty. My father has seen one of these officers, wounded at Cassano by a musket shot, which went entirely through his body, making its way through both arms. He retained during the remainder of his life a kind of hiccough from the effects of this wound. His name was Villegenet. The regiment in which my father served, and which had been under the command of his father, passed through Mezières in 1730, whither this officer had retired, broken down, and almost in his dotage. He came to see his beloved colours again, and embrace his former brothers in arms. He was told that a son of his colonel and benefactor served in the regiment. He pressed my father in his arms, and with eyes bathed in tears, uttered the most affecting expressions of love and gratitude. My father found this act of generosity so much honoured in the case

of this unfortunate officer, that all the gifts of princes, particularly gifts in money, would not have afforded him so much satisfaction.

My grandfather went, in 1706, to take the waters at Digne *, and he there found the means of attaining happiness in spite of his infirmities, by the choice he made of the consolatory support, which he preserved for the remainder of his life, against his sufferings, and the effects of that impetuous and violent temper which swayed him, defied all counsel, overcame all resistance, and would have proved very prejudicial to him, if nature had not given him an excellent judgment to counteract his extreme vivacity. He there found Madame de Castellane and her daughter. Of so many branches of this house which have since been called into existence and are now extinct, not one bore the name of Castellane, except the branch of

* It was here that occurred the commencement of an event by which Providence wished to give him the reward of his manly and meritorious actions, the example he had set, and his encouragement of the Christian virtues, for which he had always shown the greatest respect. He was destined, in short, to have a partner of rare merit, in order to maintain his house and perpetuate his race. It was thus fortunate that Providence had endowed him, together with the defects of a decisive and overbearing character, with a lofty, upright, and stedfast reason, which, joined to a mind of a superior cast, exercised, no doubt, its influence both upon himself and upon others, and made him adopt a choice suitable as well to his defects as his good qualities.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Castellane-Norantes, which all the others considered the eldest; but with this exception, never was a noble and ancient house so ignorant of its lineage and titles. My grandfather was struck with Mlle. de Castellane's beauty, and still more with her dignified manners and superior sense*, so much so, that he wished to make her his wife, he who had never in his life thought of marrying. She was destitute of

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* Notwithstanding her truly extraordinary beauty, this young lady was of a serious and even austere turn of mind. We transcribe, in support of our assertion, a passage from the writings of her son, who constantly mentions his mother.

" There never was a female who possessed at every period of her life a more dignified and imposing air, and yet was more free from every pretension. At twelve and fourteen years of age she fancied she was ugly, because she saw no face that bore any resemblance to hers. At the age of sixteen she was both cited and feared for her seriousness and good sense: she used to say that she always found herself too young or too old for society. Of grave and even retired habits, the most engaging person would not have known how to win her. She said that Marshal Turenne would have proved dangerous to her, and this she has constantly asserted. Having always from her infancy been partial to the society of persons advanced in years, and enjoying a high reputation, she had frequently heard encomiums passed upon this great man with the enthusiasm which he communicated to all who knew him. Married to a man both imposing and highly respectable, and seeing him the object of every one's respect, she had undoubtedly felt her soul elevated. One day a lady gave her to understand that people complained of my father's haughty and impetuous temper, and even pitied her on that account.

" 'Ah! Madam,' she replied, 'you would not think so if you knew what happiness it is to be able to respect one's husband!' "— *Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

fortune; he felt that his independence would be the less affected, and her poverty would be made up for by the defects of his temper and his infirmities of body. He enjoyed a great reputation, and was consequently much respected in his province; but his haughty and unbending temper caused him to be also much feared. Innumerable instances were related of his peculiarities, no doubt much exaggerated, as is always the case when people wish to increase a man's celebrity. His style of living, his manners, and his expensive habits, made people fancy him very rich; for he had a great deal of order, and nobody ever meddled with his private affairs.

His suit was well received by the young lady's mother. Fortunately, Mademoiselle de Castellane had an elevated mind. She was one of those women of whom Montluc says, "What virtuous lady would wish to unite herself to a man possessing all his nerves and bones?" I say, fortunately, because her reputation in her province was such, that she had refused several offers much above her natural expectations, without any regard to fortune, and merely because she felt happy at home with her father, whom she tenderly loved. My grandfather's reputation and distinction struck her with admiration.

John Anthony conducted this negociation with all the singularity of his character. He proposed to Mademoiselle de Castellane to marry him without informing

her parents of it, until the day after the ceremony. She replied, that surprise was only proper in war, and the proposal went no further.

She has since told her children, that upon the reports then spread relative to the Marquis of Mirabeau's intentions, Madame de Valavoire, the most illustrious woman of her day, at that time far advanced in years, and extremely attached to Mademoiselle de Castellane, desired to be informed by her of the circumstance, and the young lady was perfectly astonished when her respected friend said to her—

" You have done very wrong."

This excellent woman, observing the astonishment apparent in the countenance of Mademoiselle de Castellane, who was accustomed to look up to her as an oracle, added—

" You ought to have taken him at his word. Nobody doubts his honour, and that he carries probity to extremes. He gave you, in his way, the strongest mark of confidence: he was deserving of your placing yourself on a level with him. Recollect, that if you unite yourself in name and interest to a man like him, nothing in the ordinary routine of life must thenceforward be a rule of conduct for you."

The young lady recollected this advice in after-life; but at that period, notwithstanding the authority of her aged friend, she could not persuade herself that she had done wrong. This reflection, however, proceeded from

a woman of great celebrity, who, fifty years before, had been deemed worthy to supply the place of her husband, wounded at the siege of Valenza in Italy, where he commanded. Being invested with the command by the will of the garrison and inhabitants, she caused the siege to be raised. The observation made by this venerable lady proves the opinion which the most distinguished persons of the province entertained of my grandfather.

His proposal remained without any further result. My grandfather repaired to Paris and Versailles, where the Duke of Vendome presented him to the king, saying, that from the first entrance of the French into Italy, until the evacuation of that country, he had not quitted his arms. The discontent to which this proud unbending soldier was then a prey, induced him to make the following impetuous answer to some remark of the monarch which did not please him—

" Yes, Sir; and if I had quitted my colours, to come hither and bribe some court strumpet, I should have been promoted, and have received fewer wounds."

The dignified monarch, who, more than any one, possessed the power of self-command, addressed some other person; and the Duke of Vendome, when he retired, said to Mirabeau—

" I ought to have known you; henceforward I shall always present you to the enemy, and never to the king."

But Vendome was himself too free-spoken not to tolerate such hasty expressions, which the well-known impatience, the warlike reputation, the daring intrepidity, and the wounds of the man who uttered them must have excused, and even justified, as the noble out-pourings of a just indignation. There never was a man more averse to all restraint, to all etiquette, and more under the sway of his first feelings, than the Duke of Vendome. When he went to his government of Provence, which he did about this time, having perceived, on horseback, near the town of Aix, the deputies of the different companies, dressed in their robes, the fear of long speeches effected more than Prince Eugene and all the enemies of Louis XIV could have accomplished. It put him to flight. He galloped across the fields, and sent word to these gentlemen that his horse was shy, and had run away with him. He arrived at full gallop at Marseilles, where he sought the man whom he deigned to call the "brave Provençal," and alighted at the house of my grandfather, whom he embraced in bed. He told him he came to fetch him to the army.

"Ah! my lord, you have already made me break my arms, my legs, and my neck, and you wish to kill me for the sake of people who do not treat you better than they treat me."

Such was the answer of the discontented censurer, but such censurers were always the first in the field of battle.

His thoughts of finally settling having meanwhile matured in his mind, he quickly concluded matters with the parents of Mlle. de Castellane *, but in his own way. He not only insisted that she should be portionless, but even gave a discharge of all his rights, and would not receive her linen and clothes. These are singularities naturally so dignified that they please every one. He married Frances of Castellane, in the month of May 1708, at the chateau of Norante, the residence of her father. She was then twenty-three years of age, and he was in his forty-second year †.

He brought his wife to Mirabeau, and almost imme-

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* His attachment to Mlle. de Castellane had become a decided passion. I have heard his cousin, Mad. de Saint Michaud (the daughter of Bruno), who then lived at Paris with her father, say that he had become uneasy and sombre. He was much sought after, and every one wished to see him. His answer to the king, at a time when the public impatience was excited, his twenty-seven wounds received all the same day, the miracle of his cure, his military reputation, the exaggerated accounts of his intrepidity and pride, excited universal curiosity. People went to his uncle's to see him; but he refused every advance. His cousin, therefore, hearing him constantly expatiate upon the perfections of Mlle. de Castellane, advised him to marry her, as the only means of restoring him to the ordinary habits of social life.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

† I have heard my mother say, that as it had been reported she was going to marry an old man, the priest asked, in his presence, if he was the bridegroom, as he did not appear at all old, notwithstanding the disproportion of age and the extraordinary beauty of the bride.—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

diately after set out for the valley of Pougelas, where his regiment was then stationed. He had just been appointed brigadier, but in a general promotion, and the estimation in which the army held him was much above his rank, at a time when military rank was considered something. Notwithstanding his infirmities, and perhaps his discontent, his zeal remained unabated.

At this period, on the death of the Marquis of Forville, provost and governor of Marseilles, the authorities of that city wrote to my grandfather, begging him to apply for this office, and the wealthiest inhabitants offered him funds to pay for it, as it was a purchasable place. He thanked them, and replied, that, having always been the friend of the Marquis of Forville, he would not enter into competition with his nephew; though there can be no doubt that the Duke of Vendome, the governor of the province, would have caused him to be preferred. A report having been spread that the Villeroi family were desirous of selling the estate of La Tour d'Aigues, this rich community itself, and the principal merchants of Marseilles, offered my grandfather funds to purchase it. He declined the offer; for though his fortune was much impaired, he did not feel himself poor, and he was thought wealthy, because his conduct was dignified and independent.

He was fortunate in not following the Duke of

Vendome to Flanders. History will not fail to record the strange and fatal events of the campaign of 1708, where this hero, continually thwarted by the *conscientious* counsels of the Duke of Burgundy, despising an army of flatterers and degraded soldiers, disdaining to be its leader, sometimes yielding to the disgust excited by contradiction, sometimes to the indignation of seeing the enemy gain the most decisive advantages under his very eyes, forfeited at length the general good opinion, and lost the absolute confidence of the king. The man whom he styled in the army "his right hand," would have been out of his sphere amid the partialities occasioned by the dissensions among the generals; and Vendome, who, when an opportunity occurred, had more than once the generous imprudence to exclaim, "Ah! where is my army of Italy!" would have been injudiciously served by the too energetic affection of a man who never would bear the slightest contradiction, unless he felt it to be just, and even then not without an effort.

My grandfather's duty called him, during the winter of 1709, to the army stationed in Dauphiny, where his sense of justice induced him to oppose the Marquis of Broglie, lieutenant-general and comptroller, the senior of all the general officers. This officer enjoyed some favour during the regency, and was Mirabeau's friend. Broglie had determined to ruin d'Angervilliers, at that time intendant in Dauphiny, and who died war secretary. It

formed part of his duty to provide stores for the army, and some one, desirous to show that he had famished the troops in their quarters, had drawn up a statement of his alleged peculations. Broglie, who knew the little respect and esteem in which the Marquis of Mirabeau held all commissaries, requested his signature to this statement.

"I shall first ascertain the facts," answered this upright man, "and when I have made my inquiries, you may rely on me." This demur surprised Broglie, who observed to Mirabeau that the question concerned only a commissary, and that his word was surely good enough to get such a fellow hanged. To this my grandfather replied, "First let us see whether he is worth the rope; for, after all, it must come to the same in the end."

He accordingly made his inquiries, and ascertained that, notwithstanding the soldiers had indeed received but small rations of oatmeal bread, and had really suffered the privations and distress peculiar to that disastrous season, all this had happened without any fault of the commissary, who had all along displayed great zeal and punctuality. He made a good report to the Marquis of Broglie, and the statement was cancelled. He was not acquainted with the commissary, thus falsely accused, and it was only a considerable time after that the latter himself related the circumstance, in answer to a compliment which my grand-

father paid him, according to old military custom, on his being appointed secretary of state.

Although the honesty of d'Angervilliers passed this inquest without any stain, a cry was afterwards raised throughout every regiment of foot against a commissary named Ruel, who became equally famous at a subsequent period, and while my father was still in the service, went by the nickname of "Mr. Cruel." Such men are rarely dismissed, having the art to persuade their superiors not to yield, and that they are interested in supporting them. My grandfather learnt that Mr. Ruel had, as they say, "cut off the arms and legs of the foot-soldiers," who had already sufficiently suffered from the stoppage of their pay, and the badness of their bread and other provisions. He stated his mind, on this occasion, in his usual way. Being one day with Lieutenant-General Dillon, commandant of the district, he publicly denounced Ruel, and promised, wherever he might meet him, to chastise him as the most unprincipled scoundrel who had ever filled a situation of trust. Thereupon one of the by-standers observed, that the marquis had been misinformed.

"Thou art the man, rascal!" said he, rising; "no one else would venture to take his part."

Ruel, for it was he, was now about to fall beneath the terrible left arm of his formidable accuser, but the Marquis of Mison forced my grandfather to forbear, by throwing his arms round his waist, giving Ruel time

to make off at full speed. When review day arrived, Ruel, who would have taken ample vengeance on the regiment, but for the presence of the colonel, stood apart, and seemed hardly to know how to look. As soon as my grandfather saw him, he cried out to him, that if he dared approach, he would have him beaten to death with halberds. Nor would the review have taken place at all, or at best it would have been carried on with speaking trumpets and telescopes, had not the Marquis of Broglie, who was on the ground, and had come thither perhaps to enjoy the sport, for he was fond of such scenes, taken the roll-book, and in his capacity of inspector, signed as for a very complete review, in order to put an end to the business *.

* The various instances we have just recorded evince the violent and ungovernable spirit which John Anthony used to display, even in actions which in themselves were just and praiseworthy. The marquis, his son, who has related many others, which Mirabeau has very properly omitted, thus closes his account of this scene.

" It undoubtedly must appear, and has appeared for some time, that I take pleasure in showing this great man (I do not fear to call him so, and to prove him so, to any judge) in a strange and fearful light; but I owe this homage to truth. I represent, however, only the outside of the man, and his habitual violence, more especially after his wounds and ailments had tried his constitution. In proportion as he was obliging and noble, nay even striking by his polished manners, and amiable and sprightly when he chose to be agreeable, in the same proportion were his indignation and starts of anger dreadful, and his spirit unyielding; but these outward appearances covered a fund of generous and exhaustless goodness, which was always apparent." — *Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Chamillard was dismissed at this period*, and the news reached the army. It produced, as it always does, a general outcry against the poor man in disgrace. But every one saw with surprise, that my grandfather, who had been so unsparing in his censure of him while he was in office, did not mention his name after his retirement. He replied to those who remarked this reserve—

"When this man held office, his unfitness was prejudicial to the state; I saw it, I said so, and was continually saying so. He is, in other respects, a very worthy man, against whom neither you nor I have any thing to say, since he is no longer in power."

During this campaign he had the command of a detachment to march to the relief of the army in Flanders. It consisted of five battalions and five regiments of dragoons. This march, in the course of which he crossed the kingdom, attracted attention. In spite of his wounds and numerous ailments, occasioned both by his protracted illness and his own impatience, he walked the whole way at the head of his infantry, and assisted with a loan of ten thousand francs, his officers, who felt most severely the rigour of a period which swallowed up every man's means and resources. In his passage through Dauphiny, the marching orders

* 1709. This term is not precise, for Chamillard resigned his two appointments of his own accord, the finance department in 1708, the war department in 1709.—*Editor.*

directed one whole day's march for his men, which he found excessive, and inquiring the reason, he learnt that it was because the route lay through M. de Medavi's privileged pleasure-grounds. This nobleman was commandant of the province, and shortly after was raised to the dignity of Marshal of France. My grandfather found this arrangement unjust, and of his own authority changed the route. He forcibly took up his quarters in some very good villages, caused provisions to be supplied with the greatest order, and then resumed the march.

Dijon claimed the privilege of allowing no soldiers to come within its walls. This impediment obliged the troops, in the most unfavourable weather, to march a league further. My grandfather had the boldness to drive in the sentinels, and traverse a city, which was, he said, "neither a stranger nor a foe." Finally, a field-officer, who had the care of the equipages, having embarked on the Saone in company with some women of doubtful character, and neglected his duty, was cashiered by my grandfather's order at the head of his men, although a brother of the grand almoner. These specimens of character are certainly singular; and I would not be understood as wishing to represent this respectable man in an unfavourable light. But, in the first place, whenever I determine to write, I make it a point of duty to tell the exact truth; and besides, if the general conduct of this hasty man was such as I have

described it, his obliging and elevated soul, his amiable and high-bred qualities and demeanour, served as a counterpoise to his imperious temper, vexatious impatience, and formidable anger. Hence we may gather this useful lesson, that liberality of heart covers faults which the most artful manners cannot disguise; and that it is rather by the feelings within than by the most plausible appearances that people of a good and daring disposition are to be won. It is but too true that man desires a master, and can never honour and serve any but his superior; but to play the latter part is not easy, and I am not sure that success is to be obtained where great natural benevolence is wanting.

Louis XIV, having exhausted his own means, and those of his subjects, could only just sustain his imposing dignity by carefully watching the expenses of his household, and submitting to the strictest economy. A formidable reputation, whether in good or evil, is almost equally alarming to a difficult and unstable government; and a disgust for men of too determined a character is unintentionally entertained. Still, when the merit remains, it frequently arises from the absence of certain qualities, those especially which have the effect of subduing fortune. If my grandfather missed the fortune he would have valued, it was only because he left the service at the moment when he could not have failed to obtain it. We desire to have men complete, if not perfect, without stopping to inquire whether

we have, or can have, a fixed idea of perfection, and whether lofty mountains do not imply deep valleys.

My grandfather became weary of his profession, and a thousand circumstances contributed to this feeling. He pleaded, above all things, his state of health, which no longer allowed him to serve as usefully as heretofore. The affection of his deserving wife undoubtedly had a share in the resolution he adopted, and the state of his affairs completed his determination. Many noble fathers make war as they would seize on an inheritance; but he was not one of these.

The campaign of 1710, in Flanders, completed his disgust. My father has been told by old Marshal Duras, who was there, and whose language was not free from the accent of the wine-shop, "that the drummers of the army in Italy would have disdained to drink with the lieutenant-generals of the army in Flanders." This was the exaggerated and whimsical expression of the common opinion founded upon facts. It is easy to anticipate the effect such a parallel must have produced upon a distinguished officer. He did not disguise his indignation, and his opportunities for making it public were pretty frequent.

One day he had to command a foraging party. He was early at the place of rendezvous, and put himself at the head of his men. There came to him a man, from the Marquis of Puységur, and said that such was the object of the business, such the plan of the enclosure,

the right here, the left there, frequently mixing up with his story the words "you must." Unluckily, this verb was repugnant to the listener; and he had never heard "you must" addressed to him without compelling the utterer to retract it. For once, the whole speech appeared so new to him, that he contained himself, and coolly asked his abrupt adviser who he was.

"Sir," he replied, "I am aide-de-camp to the Marquis of Puységur, and am sent hither with his orders."

"And who is this Marquis of Puységur?"

The officer's amazement was overwhelming. The Marquis of Puységur, who was at that time an officer of considerable merit and great reputation, and who died marshal of France, was in reality a highly respected quarter-master-general; and in a large inactive army, such a man is for the most part the pivot upon which the whole turns. General officers without end, ignorant and lazy, who show themselves five or six days in the year to the army, and call that serving a campaign, who fear nothing so much as that their turn may come at last to be present at some skirmish, are quite delighted when anything is apparently confided to their management, that is to say, when they are taught their letters. The army of Flanders was more than usually in this predicament; so that it had become a rule for the Marquis of Puységur to set them their tasks. In this instance, however, he had applied to the wrong person.

"Sir," said this untractable scholar, with emphasis,

"go and tell M. de Puységur to be ———*; and as for you, another time I hope you will be more apt in distinguishing apprentices."

The matter did not rest here. After the forage was collected, my grandfather openly undertook to carry the thing further, by asking, with dumbfounding jocoseness —"How much have we to pay the CICERONE of the army, that clear-sighted man, who, from his bed, takes upon himself to teach general officers how to distinguish their right hand from their left?"

Puységur, who perhaps was not a remarkable man, but careful, prudent, and temperate, sent him a polite and conciliatory message, urging as an excuse a notion he entertained that as M. de Mirabeau was capable of serving as a guide through Italy, he, who had always served in Flanders, might be able to give him some information respecting that country. My grandfather replied, that in the gratuitous instructions given to him, less mention was made of the country, than of the employment and direction of the troops under his command; that it was true these things depended in a great measure on the ground; but that, without assuming to be a quarter-master, he had always made it a point, when performing his actual duty, to study his future duties, by which means he had become perfectly well acquainted with the country; that, on the other hand, he had never in his life taken any advice, or received any command, without retaining the right to

do exactly the reverse, if he saw occasion; that it was thus they served in Italy, and if they cringed in Flanders, it was wrong to send him there; that after all, he had not implicitly believed that M. de Puységur was stupid enough to want to teach him anything, but in the noise he made, had no other object than to show the generals serving in the army of Flanders, the servility to which they had freely submitted *.

We fancy, as we relate these incidents, that we hear the pedants of the present day observe, that modern discipline would have been fully able to subdue such men as these. As it is impossible to bring before them the formidable impression which Medusa's head would probably make upon them, we beg them to consider that brave men are required in the army; that when such men are, moreover, enlightened by nature, by thirty years' experience, and by their constant presence in the field of battle;—when they are endowed with a form which at once is awful to the enemy, and encouraging to their own men;—when they are distinguished for decision, and are still more hasty than even they are reputed to be;—finally, when they are covered with honourable scars, and proud of a noble independence,

* Besides the vehemence of a proud spirit, another circumstance will serve to explain this rebuke to the Marquis of Puységur. The latter was the sworn enemy of the Duke of Vendôme. See Saint Simon, vol. vii. page 162, etc. edit. 1829. Paris. Santelet.—*Editor.*

we must, whatever we be, either take t leave them. The necessity of the case urges us to take them, and there is but one way of doing so, which was that of the Duke of Vendôme and ancestor, Henry IV. To leave them, however, was the mode followed by M. de Puységur, as it is by all those wiseacres who have no kingdoms to lose or win.

The death of the general*, to whom my grandfather was most warmly attached, and who valued him above every other officer in the army, would alone have sufficed, at any other period, to disgust him with the service; but the appearance and manœuvres of the army in Flanders filled the measure of his dislike. He at that time commanded the Alsacian brigade, and he always spoke afterwards with the highest esteem of that fine foreign regiment. But so insignificant was the campaign, in such little estimation did he hold the commander of the army, the much-extolled Marshal Villars, whom he very properly looked upon as a blusterer, a mere quack, that he took the resolution no longer to witness the disgrace which so numerous an army had to endure. Nevertheless, he did not withdraw till after he had seen the fruitless attempt to relieve Douai, and felt convinced that nothing would be achieved during the campaign. My father has heard him say, that while the army was in the act of

* Vendôme died at Tignaroz, on the 11th June, 1712, aged 58. —*Editor.*

retiring, after having approached Prince Eugene's lines and after having suffered this important town to be taken, though defended by an immense train of artillery, he saw Marshal Villars parading along the column, in his post-chaise, singing an air of one of the operas of the day.

This levity, after so recent and disgraceful a check, shocked my grandfather so much, that he set off next day, without taking leave of the brilliant commander, whose affected gaiety formed his chief merit with the soldiers. My father has since heard M. Duparquet, who had great elegance of manners, and was much sought after at Paris, relate an adventure which my grandfather's return occasioned, and this anecdote will bear evidence of that eccentricity of character maintained in private life by the man whom we have endeavoured to make known.

"In the year 1710," said M. Duparquet, "I had left the army on leave of absence, and was forced on the road to make room for a man, on horseback like myself, but who was attended by several servants and some led horses. He was a tall, well-looking man, with a haughty military air.

"'Young man, come hither,' said he, after having examined me. I obeyed.

"'Are you not a grey musqueteer?'

"'I am, Sir.'

"'I remembered the uniform saddle-cloth of the

company,' he said. 'I belonged formerly to that corps. They were good for nothing then, and I doubt if they are much better now. What think you?'

"I replied that the gentleman was a good judge of physiognomy. He then asked me whither I was going? I replied, that, having been unwell, I was sent home to recruit my health.

"'And where is your home, pray?'

"'At Montelimart.'

"'So much the better, I am going thither also, and you shall be my escort.'

"I thanked him very warmly. I was not so stupid then, as I am now, because I was much poorer. I understood pretty readily that I had said St. Julian's prayer. He ordered his servants to remove the bag fastened behind my saddle, and I jogged along side by side with this old gentleman, who from that moment assumed as much authority over me as if he had been my father. On arriving at an inn, to which his cook and retinue had preceded us*, his servants, after their master's example, gave themselves the airs of masters among their equals. The host held the stirrup, silver absolutely poured among the chamber-

* Besides horses of every description, he had twelve mules and a chariot with six oxen, his silver plate, an excellent and good-looking steward, a butler, and all the implements of cookery, with medicines for his attendants.—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.* —*Editor.*

maids; then followed a good supper with the old gentleman's own wine. I was merry, because he desired me to be so. There was agreeable conversation, and pleasant stories were told. In a word, I got drunk, was carried to bed, and early next morning he sent to know how I had passed the night. I tried to look abashed; but he did not heed me. He sent for me to breakfast, but I had no appetite, which he did not notice. We travelled every day without stopping for refreshment until evening; I was sent to bed every night in the same state, and in this manner we crossed the kingdom from Flanders to Dauphiny, always faring in the same style: I constantly carried to bed, and as constantly called up at break of day, wondering in my own mind how it happened that this man, who made every one bend to him, was known at every inn in France, and was every where received as if he were the governor of the province. For my own part, I had forgotten my own identity, and felt myself nothing else than his aid-de-camp, his servant, his slave, or whatever you please. In fact, I never saw any man so fully obeyed: his attendants, nay, his very horses, all followed his eye, for he had lost almost all his fingers! At length I began to feel that the air of Dauphiny and the neighbourhood of home restored me a little to myself; and, as we drew near to Montelimart, I told him I hoped he would honour me by accepting a lodging with my family, and thus enable them to show my gratitude. He replied

that he should certainly see them, were it only to give a good account of me; but he was then weary, every thing was ready at the inn, and his first intention was to go to bed. I durst not press the matter. We arrived, and I asked his permission to leave him for a moment, in order to go and embrace my parents. 'No,' said he; 'supper is ready, I must take a mouthful before I go to bed; after which you may join your family, who will never complain of your considering the evening as a tail to the day's journey.'

"I was forced to obey, make a hearty supper, prate about the ladies of Montelimart, and drink their healths, until I met my usual fate; and thus my family was balked for one day more. I was put to bed, but for this once, I was allowed to sleep it out; and when starting up next morning, I asked for the Marquis, I was told that he had departed two hours before, having paid my share of the reckoning, and leaving me quite ashamed to have to go and confess to my dear parents that I had been fifteen or twenty hours in the town, and had got drunk, before I could find time and obtain permission to come and pay my duty to them!"

Such were the external manners of this extraordinary man, who, in the prime of life and almost within certain reach of the proudest military honours, withdrew from public life. Some years previously, he had seen in Languedoc a man meanly attired, with a ruddy

face and red wig, superintending a few workmen who were building a dry stone wall. This man was M. de Pérignan, who then resided on his estate. "Had any body then foretold," said he, "that, thirty-five years after, I should see this man, without stirring from his estate, become a duke and peer, and assume the blue riband, whilst I, after having had my arms, legs, and neck broken in the service, should come at last to build dry stone walls in my turn, how astonished I should have been!"

M. de Pérignan afterwards became the first Duke of Fleury; he was the father of the present duke, whom the cardinal selected from his family to make him bear the family name. He sent for him from his estate, where he used to get drunk with the village farrier. One or two badges of honour were put upon his coat, and another generation was thus rendered illustrious in his family.

The decline of my grandfather's strength, the disappointment of his military ambition, the disordered state of his affairs, and his affection for his wife, determined him to sell his regiment, and leave the service.

"I have never," said he to the king, "obtained but one favour from Your Majesty, that of giving my regiment away before I die; I shall never ask Your Majesty but for one more—permission to sell it."

It has been asserted that after permission to dispose of his regiment had been granted, the king was

so struck on beholding in the gallery of Versailles, his lofty stature, his black sling, and his large eyes, the expression of which was seldom mild, that he intimated to him that, his business being over, he was to withdraw. The fact is neither true nor likely. Louis XIV was not uncivil, nor can any one lose the royal favour, without having deserved to lose it. True it is that the term "out of favour" has since been employed in the council chamber, with reference to my father, who was not more of a courtier than his predecessor; but that happened under Louis XV, in whose reign the proprieties of a court were very differently understood. But Louis XIV strictly observed them, and on no account would have disgraced a good officer.

Far from losing favour, my grandfather was the subject of a very high compliment. During the two following campaigns, official letters were sent to him, entitling him to serve under M. D'Argenson, who commanded the army in Dauphiny. He might have used them, have received his pay, have remained at home, and yet have enjoyed all the credit of serving. He could not, however, brook any kind of compromise which offended his sensitiveness. He, therefore, sold his commission to the Marquis of Gensac, and turned his whole thoughts to the settlement of his affairs, living in a very wild retreat, upon a cliff, which barred a double mountain gorge, continually lashed by the north wind. To this mode of life, so entirely new to him,

he devoted all his energies, and was a benefactor to the whole country. For there was a generous and fatherly kindness inseparable from his military system of police, which was still very singular.

He availed himself of a kind of awe inspired by his military fame and undaunted courage, exaggerated by report, to establish tranquillity in a part of the country where the vicinity of a parliament, and a discontented community, encouraged and fostered a host of itinerant attorneys and provincial lawyers. He gave out that he had orders to drown in the bateau * all who attempted to practise mischievous subtleties. One lawyer, more incautious and more greedy than his brethren, was bold enough to risk the attempt, and opened an office at the Grand-Logis at Mirabeau †. Thereupon my grandfather told one of his suite to rid him of that man. The servant, having been instructed what to do, descended from the cliff with one of his comrades, and, on pretence of drinking, took up his quarters in the same house. A country attorney is not apt to run away from the mere noise of glasses. He, therefore, approached, and began to converse with the new guests. However, the two began to drink, then to speak without restraint, then to assert, then to disagree, then to dispute, and from

* The ferry-boat of Mirabeau, on the Durance, at the base of the rock.—*Editor.*

† An inn, situated half a league from the castle, on the road to Gap, Sisteron, and Manosque, leading to Marseilles.—*Editor.*

harsh words proceeded to threats. The attorney reminded them of the conduct and respect due to sociability: but when men are once heated with wine, to argue with them only makes them worse. The two servants were gradually excited, and at last came to blows; but these they dealt with so little skill, that whilst the adviser was endeavouring to prove himself a friend to both parties, he received from both sides the perquisites due to the adverse party. Every blow fell upon him. Every thump brought him an apology; yet hard knocks fell so thickly about his ears, that he was soon covered with bruises. This comic scene was a lesson for him and the whole tribe of lawyers, and nothing more was seen of them.

Another transaction made my grandfather pay up the debts of the community of Mirabeau to the king, in a singular manner. He used to charge his wife with all the details of his lands, as well as with those of his household. A man came and claimed from her a small balance of taxes, which had been forgotten. This individual raised his voice, which was unusual, and the owner of the castle having been brought out by the noise, the man fled. A few days after he sent a summons, which was still more irritating. My grandfather knew that the man was treasurer to the magistracy, and that at bottom he was right; so he took patience, and put the fox's skin over his customary armour. He ordered the parish accounts to be brought to him,

discovered them to be unsettled, and even overladen with debts, as they all were in those exhausted times. He made himself master of the customs and regulations, detected double payments, surcharges, manœuvres, and numerous instances of oppression. He commenced proceedings against the man; and no sooner was it known that he was the leader of this insurrection, than memorials were sent to him from every quarter, with the notes of the different parishes in the district; in a word, he pursued the matter so eagerly and so closely, that the poor man was driven to seek friends to solicit my grandfather's forbearance. The Marquis of Mirabeau could not refuse to listen to the recommendation of the Marquis of Pontevès-Buous, his first cousin, a nobleman very much respected throughout the province, nor to the entreaties of Madame de Valavoire, who was esteemed by all Europe; but it was settled that the treasurer should give the parish a discharge for 16,000 francs, which it owed him, principal, arrears, and interest. After this the poor wretch left the country.

So active and respected a proprietor soon succeeded in changing the face of the whole neighbourhood. His large estates, as in all ruined countries, were inhabited by idle vicious colonists. To render them diligent, all at once, he set about some very difficult and tedious works. He undertook to turn into an orchard a mountain of rocks near the castle. He set some to break the rocks, others to carry off the stones, with which he

enclosed a large piece of ground with a very thick wall of dry stone. Others were directed to bore holes in the rock to plant four thousand olive trees. The most robust men were employed at the rudest labour, armed with iron stakes and enormous clubs. The women, and even the children, carried stones from place to place; and these labours, which were punctually executed, never ceased till harvest time; the master being always at their head, in all weathers, which are sometimes frightful in those parts. He had a hard beginning; but this rigour very soon produced its fruit: there were no more domestic broils, no gaming, no more drunkenness, no more beggary. Property was more respected, families less wretched, and the benevolent proprietor soon gave his tenants, in the form of an easy quit-rent and at long leases, very good lands to clear, by which they were able to support themselves. These are amongst the highest duties a landowner can fulfil, and perhaps none are more meritorious. At all events, all that a wealthy man can do, or ought to do, is to turn the qualifications with which nature has endowed him to as good an account as possible for those among whom it is his destiny to live *. His duties

* There is a passage in the private memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, which proves that his father, when executing these works, displayed the authority of the lord quite as much as he did the watchfulness and kindness of the patron.

"Not one of his tenants could, on any account, stay from his

as a father were as punctually fulfilled in his own house. He had six sons and one daughter. All the younger sons he took care to have received knights of Malta whilst under age, which proved a most heavy charge to him, inasmuch as the payment of their passage out happened precisely at a time when the great, sudden, and repeated changes in the currency *, by which the unstable regency was agitated, when the artifices of the Bank to sustain the *System*, and the consequence of the almost incalculable debts and liabilities in which Louis XIV had plunged the nation, had absolutely ruined the finances of France.

He gave himself up entirely to these arrangements, with the ardour and perseverance he displayed in all his actions. He had thoughts of settling at Paris, whither some remains of ambition still urged him to go. The Marquis of Broglie invited him thither in the regent's name, and every thing seemed to promise him the reward of his services, and the most speedy promotion. Fate, however, ordained otherwise. At

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work, unless he was ill, and in that case he received assistance, or was allowed to work on his own land: on this point my father was very scrupulous, and none dared deceive him."—*Editor.*

* They used to make their payments to the Order of Malta in Spanish piastres or pistoles. Our own coin being debased and altogether suspected, that of other countries bore an excessive price. But this excellent parent, ever heedful of his duties, had too deeply felt the value of independence not to obtain it for his children, and he would not suffer them to lose even the period of childhood.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

first a thousand foolish cavils detained him at home, where he was forced to make many prior arrangements necessary to a removal. A legal report relative to some encroachments on the Beaumont estate having excited the attention of a lover of law-suits, this man roused the whole community—no difficult matter, in the state of the municipal and judicial order, or rather disorder, by which we are governed. His right was soon apparent, and a speedy settlement was expected; but it was necessary to drive chicanery from all her hiding places. My grandfather, unused to this business, but who applied to it all his wonted activity and energy, obtained eight successive judgments, and concluded the affair by pardoning the guilty, and not making use of any of his advantages.

Meanwhile, much time had been wasted in these fastidious law-suits, and the year 1718 had come, with the dreadful shocks which were to follow. In these times of sudden and insane fluctuations in the currency, a thing valued only six francs was raised next day to forty-eight. The payment of rents stopped all at once, because, when the debtor desired to pay, the creditor would not take his money, and when the latter wished to receive the former was loath to pay. Then followed bills, papers, bankruptcies, disorder, and despair, the usual concomitants of excessive stock-jobbing.

Suddenly it was whispered about that the plague had appeared, and was beginning to spread. The

alarm it occasioned was terrible, and every passage was closed. It was but too true that the horrible scourge was coming on. My grandfather was not a man to fly from it. He knew the adage, "war in town, and plague in the country." The castle of Mirabeau was easily fastened and defended. He ordered the walls and gates of the village to be rebuilt; and having stored the castle, he wanted to leave his wife and children in it, whilst he threw himself into Marseilles, his old residence, which the governor, the judge, and the corporation had just forsaken to all the unspeakable horrors of contagion and anarchy. These immediately called every crime into action, and converted that city into a scene of atrocity, ascribed to a strange ferment in the air. The Marchioness of Mirabeau, who had long been unwell, and was overcome by so much additional anxiety, whether she had no strength left, or whether this last stroke of generosity, so natural to an energetic man, aware of his powers and who sees his opportunity, was beyond the fortitude of a tender mother:—the Marchioness of Mirabeau refused to comply with his wish, and determined to follow him, leaving their children to the care of the household servants and vassals. Her husband yielded: if a fault *, it was one which morality will forgive.

* "He would not have yielded even to my mother, had he not been called away by an imperative duty. Towards the close of the year 1730, the regiment in which I served being then stationed in

He ordered every gate but one to be walled up, and at the one he had left he stationed a city guard. After this he opened his house to as many fugitives as it would contain, and withdrew with his wife and family to Gap, in Dauphiny, where great excite-

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the Cévennes, my mentors were afraid I should catch the small-pox, as it happened to be virulent in those parts. They therefore sent me to my aunt, Madame d'Estoublon, at Arles. This lady, through a like apprehension, sent me on to Mirabeau, where my father then resided. When he had examined all my credentials : ' To fly,' said he, ' whatever be the reason, when a man has a duty to perform, forms no part of the principles I have inculcated, and which I am resolved you shall imbibe; but since you have deserted your colours, a subaltern must not abandon them till he has brought back two men. When you have accomplished this, you shall have leave to go.' "—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

Let us not deceive ourselves: this proud language agreed with the manners of the times, as well as with the character of the man, whose sensibility, on the other hand, was the more acute, because he was anxious to conceal it.

" In 1728 he lost, through a fatal accident, my eldest brother, who already held a commission in his old regiment, and was a young man of the greatest promise. My father, who, in spite of his rude outward appearance, was full of feeling, and strongly attached to his children, had been very deeply affected by the death of the youngest; and he took it the more to heart, because, according to the rules and manners of men of his description, nothing must be seen, and proofs of affection would have borne the censure of weakness. My mother, whether from principle or from habit, had adopted the same apparent insensibility. They used to shut themselves up in their oratory, and make their appearance afterwards with countenances beaming with serenity. But nature never concedes any thing, and this time my father became seriously ill."—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

ment prevailed. Here he succeeded in restoring order without the use of letters patent of command, which he refused.

As if the convulsions of nature had not sufficed, the madness of the government completed the distress of this almost ruined country. The crisis of the *System* was at its most deadly period. The monstrous decrees which those mischievous orgies occasioned created still more disorder in the provinces than in the metropolis, where every species of absurdity existing in a mass, served in a measure to counteract one another. The edicts, which authorised all descriptions of payment in paper absolutely discredited, and obliged the people to accept it, could not but engender, in a poor, and consequently interested and turbulent district, injustice, cruel animosity, spoliation, war, and general consternation. It was this torrent of evil and disaster which my grandfather arrested in the country in which he had selected an asylum during this fit of national epilepsy; and I must ever consider the civic triumph he obtained, and of which may-be not a vestige now remains, as one of the most splendid, or, at least, one of the most deserving actions of his life *.

* An anecdote still remains which will serve to illustrate this point. I cannot recall it without emotion, and I wish to save it from oblivion by giving it a place in these Memoirs.

During this universal struggle between interest and equity, an example occurred which might have led the whole country astray.

Thus it happens that one man is sometimes able to revive the virtue of a whole country by the power of

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The Marquis of Rocheblave, a young man much respected up to that time, and who had married Mademoiselle Dillon, the daughter of an officer under whom my grandfather had served, having long lived on the most friendly terms with his sisters, had cooled in his affection in consequence of some altercations on pecuniary matters. His sisters, badly advised, had irritated him; and he gave them notice that he had just deposited in bank notes the whole amount of their dowers. These wretched women, thus ruined and reduced to want, excited the most sincere pity; but those who would fain have followed the example of such a man as the Marquis of Rocheblave, or called themselves his friends, defended his cause by pleading his large family. This occurrence was about to produce the most injurious consequences throughout the country.

The Marquis of Rocheblave came one day to visit my grandfather, and the conversation turned upon the distresses of the times. My grandfather, whose eloquence carried all before it, deplored the events and circumstances which had engendered among men, vices that never would have existed but for the combined effects of disappointed hopes and over-excited fears. Then, as if he were mentioning the case of a friend, he went on to say—

"During the sacking of a town, taken by storm, every one exclaims 'Unless I plunder I shall be plundered; unless I kill I shall be slaughtered; unless I destroy I shall be surprised; every one does so, why should not I? Besides, I have risked all, lost all, and I must retrieve my losses.' Thus, the greatest crimes are the consequences of the first steps, yet the first steps were involuntary, nay compulsory. A debtor pays me; all my property falls, in my hands, into bits of straw; I have a right to profit by the same law which plunders me to get rid of my creditors, who, after all, will lose every thing. He who has nothing and owes nothing has lost his means of existence as well as his right. My brothers received their shares from me in a tangible form. Now, this deterioration in value of a fifth, or a sixth, is become the half of what I have left. Is it not fair that each should bear his part of the law's curse?

speech, when his conduct and his rank have earned for him the general confidence. Besides, this talent of

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If my mother's house had been destroyed, would she not have been a sharer in the loss? The case is in point; and I may pay her widow's pension, and her claims in the same manner, the more so, as I have begotten children on the reliance of my former possessions, which children are still young, and I owe them substantial aid. Thus, from argument to argument, from need to need, from gulf to gulf, supported by an assumed multitude of savage instances, we forget, we repel, we break, we sever every tie; we abjure honour, virtue, conscience, and at length nature herself. We are left alone, we would shun our very selves; we feel ourselves to be the hideous satellites of an insane and barely acknowledged law; we become citizens without law, men without faith, gentlemen without honour, landlords without credit or reputation; marks for scandal, comrades for the profligate, fratricides, parricides, and every thing that is bad. We tremble at our loneliness; we fear our own thoughts, and we strive in vain to call back the fanciful chain of false reasonings and vile examples that lead us astray."

"Ah! Sir," exclaimed Rocheblave, in dismay, "you don't know to whom you speak."

"To you, Sir, who are not thus wretched, and are incapable of so criminal a weakness; to you who feel the same horror at this picture that I do."

"Alas! I am exactly in this very predicament!"

"You, Sir! I could thrust my hand into the fire rather than believe it. I have seen mankind long enough to know them well, and you have a countenance which was never made to deceive. I say once more I would be your surety. But should it indeed turn out that you have reason to be anxious on your own account—since your heart honours me with a confidence which I know how to prize, condescend to open it entirely, and let me know the wretches who have urged you to such an extremity that you cannot look without alarm on the evils that must ensue."

"Ah! Sir, if you knew all the bad ——"

"But towards whom, Sir? Say, I conjure you!"

conciliation was a real gift in the venerable man whose character and deeds we are attempting to

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"My own sisters!"

"You relieve me, Sir. I began to fear you would be driven to show generosity to some narrow-minded wretch, who makes it painful to practice even virtue for his benefit. But misunderstandings between members of the same family never last long in a heart like yours, when restored to its natural feelings. You will not listen to execrable advice; you are too noble to reduce your own sisters to beggary!"

"I hope so. They should, however, have known me better. It was only to oblige them to do me justice that I wanted to make them undergo the trial of dependence, without intending to make an ill use of it."

"You deceived yourself, by first courting disparagement in order to have an opportunity of forgiving others. Nature, Sir, has marked out the limits of the dependence which ought to exist between your sisters and you; and not only nature, but that excellent law by which your birth and rights have been secured. The odious law which they want to turn against yourself, is no law in the estimation of a conscientious man like you. The king, or the government in his stead, has no authority to subvert the nature of things. An unjust decree is nothing other than the law of the strongest. You are the natural protector of your sisters; you cannot invoke the law to injure them; but in its place let your kindness substitute another law, that they may love you for your generosity, and be grateful for your virtue, which would not suffer even temptation to pollute so noble a heart. Come, Sir, since you have thought me worthy of being your comrade in arms and opinions, allow me to take upon myself to restore you to peace and happiness."

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of the bishop, a very worthy man, and an exemplary and zealous pastor, whom the Marchioness of Mirabeau had sent for, on the arrival of the Marquis of Rocheblave. The conversation had taken a favourable turn.

"Ah! sir," said the young man to the bishop, "you see before you

pourtray *. Not that he was particularly fitted for the duties of an umpire, an employment so laudable and so worthy of him. Such duties require much patience in their fulfilment, and this virtue had not been granted to my grandfather. Besides, a certain portion of bad faith is sure to be mixed up with

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a penitent sinner, who owes his contrition to this respectable man!" The bishop had summoned Rocheblave's sisters to attend also. They rushed into their brother's arms. But our judges were too well acquainted with the force of emotion and its short existence to give evil suggestions time to return. Every detail of the business had been previously discussed, every thing was now settled. A notary was called in. Shame, regret, and honour made all parties compliant. Every proposal was agreed to, drawn up, and signed. Each returned to the drawing-room with a radiant countenance. The fame of this reconciliation added to the public feeling, and the force of example put an end to such iniquitous proceedings.—*Note by Mirabeau.*

* "I heard more than once, when a child, the story related of an old canon, a regular resident at Perthuis, whom my father overawed to such a degree, that he induced the good man to sign an agreement, which the canon, in his blindness, believed disadvantageous. On leaving the house, he kept pacing up and down a public walk, and telling the story of one 'cured against his will.' Some one accosted him to inform him that one of his fair penitents was waiting for confession. The angry priest, vexed at this interruption, before he had rounded his period, turned towards the messenger, exclaiming—

"'Let her wait; let her wait;' and proceeded with his story. A moment after there came a second message of the same nature. The poor priest resigned himself to his fate; but, turning towards the company, he said—

"'I am going, but shall impose a penance she won't soon forget.' Thus it was that a poor cracked conscience had to endure the spite due to a vehement arbitrator."—*Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

every contention. I do not allude merely to that which makes us the dupe of our own fancies; but to that also by which we strive to persuade others. To speak out boldly, it is not only bad faith, but falsehood, a vice so repugnant to his exalted mind, that he would have become an adversary, an inexorable foe, to any knave who had trifled with him. When, however, he saw on both sides that there was nothing to blame but stubbornness, he took up the business with a resolution to succeed. But he took these pains only for his best friends, whom his conscience recommended to him as belonging to his jurisdiction. His heart was too sensitive to beat for every one.

The shock the *System* had sustained was more severely felt by him than by any other. He held at the time, contracts to the amount of three hundred thousand francs, upon the Hotel de Ville at Paris. These securities became payable like any other sort. Confined to his residence by the plague, he could not go in person to see to those financial fluctuations, which exceeded anything ever known before, and puzzled the most skilful. The Marquis of Castellane, his brother-in-law, was living at Paris. He was attached to the Regent's court, and his wife was lady in waiting to the Duchess of Orleans. My grandfather applied to his brother-in-law to dispose of his bills due, and the latter purchased shares with the amount. The Marquis of Castellane, the most unskilful man of his day, was

borne away by the same tide that carried off so many others. After shares came bills, with the awful rapidity which at this fatal period submerged every fortune in France. The Marquis of Castellane, knowing all the secrets of the Palais Royal, was playing the same game as the court, and had friendly monitors, who warned him in time. He confessed as much to his brother-in-law, but my grandfather never reproached him. Castellane was secretly advised that the bills were going to fall, and that he ought immediately to convert them into cash, whatever might happen on 'Change. He even went to the Rue Quincampoix, the head-quarters of stock-jobbing rabble, with the intention of selling, on his own account, as well as on that of his brother-in-law. At the present time, when surprising progress has been made in the artifices of stock-jobbing, we know that by means of the legerdemain practised by the Coryphæi of this species of gambling, declines are constantly preceded by false reports, which occasion a rise in those effects about to disappear. Very particular pains had been taken to ensure this result at a time when every one was the dupe of the same fallacies, and when each, too anxious to practice deceit, assisted in increasing the general delusion, or rather the universal mania. That day, for ever memorable in the records of madness, was the very day the bill folly reached its climax. The general enthusiasm caught the Marquis of Castellane, who had come on purpose to take advantage of it, having

been well warned to that effect. Instead of turning his own paper into specie, he purchased bills, and sacrificed his own and my grandfather's shares. The warning was just: the bills fell a few days after, with natural rapidity, since their decline must have been in proportion to their circulation, and my grandfather found himself in possession of three hundred thousand francs in stock of no value, except by the decree just mentioned, and of which he would have abhorred to take advantage, although he was greatly in debt. These bills remained stagnant in his hands; they are now in my father's library, and we look upon them as our best title-deeds.

My father relates, in his historical eulogy upon his mother, the resolution then adopted by this exemplary couple. With what delicacy and honourable confidence did the husband consult his wife as to the measures to be adopted! With what noble, true, and unaffected sympathy did that excellent woman justify so high a proof of esteem, without mistaking the motive of this deference, or taking credit for a feeling which she appeared to pretend to have created, without leaving it for a moment to be doubted that the course for a virtuous man to take was already unchangeably fixed! We feel a pleasure when we meet in history with such examples of generosity and disinterestedness. We admire them, and they move us; and, although each reader singles out only those points which accord with his own disposition, still the most narrow mind cannot

but feel that generosity is the root of virtue, true greatness, and real glory, things which it is useless to ask of fortune. These historical examples stand out in bold relief, and become celebrated; they have both witnesses and admirers, bound by interest and gratitude. Those who have made such sacrifices retain the glory of a great action, besides the moral benefit which may thence accrue. But in the case I have just mentioned, everything was to be given up, from no motive but honesty, without obliging any individual, without a single witness to the deed. It was necessary to pass from straitened circumstances to actual poverty; for an income of fifteen thousand livres, drawn out of a fortune which had been exhausted by thirty years' warfare, made it impossible in future that my grandfather should stir out, to go whither he was summoned, to obtain the reward of his services, in the promotion, favours, and even indemnities, readily bestowed on eminent officers, who were at hand, and had sustained any loss by the *System*. It was necessary to forego all such advantages, or else borrow, and live upon expectation. What an alternative to propose to a man of such a character! It was his fate to have to give up everything, when he began to see a large and grown-up family about him. He was reduced to shut himself up for life on a rock, in order to liquidate debts which he might have annulled in a day, consisting of legacies to

hospitals, debts due to persons unknown, many of whom would not have scrupled to have paid their own debts with the valueless stock.

" Never mind," he used to say, " the end of it would have been, that the last creditor would have had to give real value for them, and the injustice would certainly have begun at my door." So he paid nobody with his bills, but kept them, and resigned himself to his fate.

It afterwards appeared, in his private affairs, how much can be effected by perseverance, order, and regularity. He lived scarcely seventeen years after this period, yet he always maintained a creditable appearance; and within that space of time he not only paid his debts, liquidated all the claims upon his house, and defrayed the expenses of his sons to Malta, but at his death he left contracts for two hundred thousand francs upon the town of Marseilles, the province, and a few private individuals. Now, we must observe that his savings could not multiply of themselves, for at that time it was a principle that those debts which were payable at stated periods, and the capital of which was invested, could not, in fairness, bear interest; and it will be easily supposed that such a man would think that in money matters, whatever affected his conscience *

* " After his retirement, he continued to live in a very prudent manner. According to theological tenets, he ought either to have embarked in business, or in some undertaking, in order to draw an

would likewise affect his honour. His money therefore remained inactive in the hands of his trustee, until he had amassed sufficient to make a payment or a compensation.

Being from that period settled in his own province, Vintimille, archbishop of Aix, and M. Le Bret, first president and intendant, entreated him to turn his attention to municipal matters, and allow himself to be appointed chief procurator of the province. He resisted these offers with firmness, and answered, playfully—

"You both honour me with some esteem, and I respect you quite as much. If I held this office for a fortnight, by that time you would think me a madman, and I, if I durst, should take you both for knaves. So let us remain as we are; charity will thereby gain something, and the province will lose nothing."

On the other hand, age did not weigh him down any more than adversity, and he still retained the energy of his nature. I once heard an anecdote on this subject which was much talked of at the time. Some custom-house officers, on the strength of false information, came suddenly down and searched the house of the parish priest at Mirabeau. They could find nothing, and off they set at full speed. But my grandfather

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income out of his money in the stocks, which they call *damnum emergens;* but this was repugnant alike to his plans and to his principles."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

was no sooner apprised of it than he ordered a pursuit, and mounting on horseback, which habit he had already relinquished, he followed their track over fallow grounds and through woods, where they had taken refuge in their fright, and drove them to the banks of the Durance, which these fellows forded in the best manner they could. Fortunately for them the water was low. This did not appease my grandfather: he wrote in the strongest terms, demanding the dismissal of all the leaders, and protesting that if this satisfaction were denied him, all the custom-house officers in the province should be driven into the Rhône or into the sea. It was deemed expedient to treat with so formidable a man, whom the provincial government would not irritate for such a trifle. Some of the officers were really dismissed, and the principal offender came, of his own accord, to crave forgiveness *.

This fiery disposition was apparent in all his dealings, but more especially when he had an opportunity of doing any good. No man was more kind-hearted,

* For this reason, up to his last moments, those wretches held him in such awe that they were always afraid to speak to him of a long list they had against him of duties and extortions. They, therefore, waited for his death to charge his widow with a great variety of claims for plate dues, mortgage dues, estate dues, &c. &c. They brought her in an account of 50,000 francs, which they had feared to present to her during her husband's life. My grandfather appears to have bequeathed to his children all his antipathy to agents of customs or excise.--*Note by Mirabeau.*

more attentive, more noble, more ready to serve, more indefatigable to oblige all who wanted his assistance, and none had reason to fear reproach from him. Nature seemed to have carved him out as the natural protector of his fellow-creatures. Whenever any poor mountaineers, who had law-suits, or people who had been obliged to leave their country from other causes, were sent to him, he took up their defence with an earnestness and vigilance which nothing could exceed. He bore down all opposition, embraced every particular, and confused nothing. His advisers, his agents, his money, his house, and his friends, were at the service of poor people; and, in this respect, his whole life was a series of noble and generous actions that gained him a very high reputation and unlimited gratitude. In fine, all the graces of benevolence adorned his actions, as much as the graces of diction and the fire of eloquence were the soul and support of his mind *.

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* "He lived in retirement, but not in solitude; on the contrary, the very best society paid him marked attention. His admired evening parties may be said to have been nothing less than a school of honour, of historical narrative, of eloquence and dignity. There you were sure to meet a great number of select individuals. His turn of mind was not that which gives most effect to the wit of others, which doubtless is the best, as it is the rarest. He had too much fire and liveliness to do this. He was by nature rather inclined to a noble and keen humour; but as this talent easily becomes severe, a family failing, his principles would not let him give way to it. A grave and lofty manner was the custom and rule at his house; but nothing could equal the energy, the subduing power, the grace-

In 1717, there were great rumours of war, and of mighty preparations. My grandfather was written to, and asked whether he would accept his former rank in the army, which would have made him lieutenant-general, and go to Italy. His health would not allow him to do so; it went on declining to his death, and his sight at last failed him all at once, so much so that he could not walk about without assistance. His countenance had never changed; the majesty of age set off

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fulness, and the majesty of his language. In every thing else, except his eyes, which, without altering in appearance, had become so weak that he could hardly see to walk, he lived on uninjured to the last, his features not having suffered the slightest change. His fine striking head, formerly rather inclined, was sustained by the silver collar which succeeded the ruptured muscles. His dress, which upon any other would have looked vulgar, appeared sumptuous upon him. No man ever showed a more elegant bearing, or affected it less.

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"When near his death, from his various active labours and his wounds, his health had become so impaired that he could not always govern his temper. Yet he perceived that his estimable wife, who had been reared under the mildest of fathers, and the best of men, seemed frightened by these violent bursts, and that so total a change of climate had also affected her blood. Honour, reason, and affection, led him to exert the utmost self-control; but whilst he was thus driven to do violence to his feelings, to the detriment of his own health, the remains of his old habits, and of that raging impetuosity which he had never entirely subdued, still retained much influence over him. Her only course was therefore to anticipate and remove every cause of excitement; and it is true to say, that she thus kept him alive."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

the beauty of his commanding stature, and enhanced all his natural advantages, which, whatever be the common opinion, are much more valuable to a man than to a woman, whose destruction, misery, and ruin, are generally the consequences of possessing them.

My grandfather died on the 27th of April 1737, in his seventy-first year, beloved and venerated by his family, revered by his countrymen, esteemed and honoured wherever his name was known. His death was felt throughout his country as a public loss. However, he held no charge, no office; he was invested with no authority, nor had he any other influence than that derived from his personal merit. His most striking qualities were not free from many of those blemishes which excite dread. His vassals feared him; every one about him wore that look of awe which a resolute master imposes*; but all regretted him, and deplored

* We transcribe from the private unpublished memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, two anecdotes, which show that this terror, produced by an exaggerated opinion of his anger and violence, affected men of very different ages and conditions.

"I was told, in 1737, by Escursau, son of the mason who repaired the castle in 1702, that one day, being then young and nimble, he was in the principal drawing room, and made an impertinent reply to some order his father had given him. My father, coming in at the moment, and having heard it, rushed at him, which so terrified Escursau, that he instantly leaped out of the nearest window, which was a good distance from the ground, and the court yard was paved."

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"The boat of Saint-Paul, an estate lying opposite to ours, with

his loss. What is the cause of this apparent anomaly? Is it that men desire to be ruled, provided they know where to seek security against oppression? Such might be the case with those who lived in his house; but there were others who owed him nothing. But why did it occur with the whole province? I will try to explain the reason.

This man deserved much, and obtained nothing. Worn out with service, covered with wounds, full of honour and enjoying a great reputation, always disinterested, noble, and just, he received neither reward, nor rank, nor place, nor pension. He stood in no man's way. After his death, his memory obtained in homage the reward which should have been given to him during his life. His defects were forgotten; nothing survived

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the Durance running between, has the privilege of plying to a certain distance. The President of Saint-Paul had sent his people to measure and trace those limits, in order to ascertain them. My father, apprised of their doings, sent his servants to throw the men into the river. The servants limited their orders to their hats and stakes. The matter had passed from my father's mind, when, riding one day to Aix, he saw a carriage with six horses draw up, and a man in black alight from it, who, leaving the road, crossed a ravine, and letting my father pass on, made him a most profound bow from the top of a bank. Having afterwards asked who this was, he was told that it was the President of Saint-Paul, a man of high birth and considerable fortune, who had taken flight on hearing of his approach. He jested, on his arrival at Aix, upon the honour they did him in supposing that he had withdrawn from public life to dust the judges' old gowns in his province."—*Private Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

him but his virtues and merit. In this world we must make a choice between ESTEEM and FORTUNE. All men resemble that original race termed Gascons; "we cannot possess at the same time their friendship and their money."

They who might censure the vivid colours we have been bold enough to use in depicting a man who has not found a place either in courtly records, which are called histories of nations, or in the lying columns of newspapers, would, in our judgment, be wrong. We do not tell them that former times at all resembled our own (for though the picture of our manners is always changing, the movements and means never change); that to make people talk about us was then, as at present, a beggarly pretension which, by braving contemporary ridicule, and the contempt of all good men, purchased with gold the vain advantage of celebrity. We will not assert that the different means: the assiduity, the endurance, and the slavery which lead men to fortune, are always repugnant to men of real worth, endowed with an honour which cannot bend to servile compliance and base submission. We will not assert that very often, too, these men, dissuaded by the promptings of wisdom from following the allurements of favour, and purchasing the enjoyment of ostentation at the cost of their time and liberty, which are the sure riches of life, leave honours and dignities to vulgar minds. But we will say that no man can be

endowed with every quality. Men of delicate feelings do not possess those gifts which enable others to elbow their way through the crowd of pretenders surrounding the counters of fortune. Sometimes, indeed, circumstances make it necessary to employ such men, and oblige a government to bring them forward. Then, it must be owned, they produce very different results from those usually expected from the favourites of the blind deity: but, happy the people! happy the times which do not witness such occurrences!

Whatever be the truth, we cannot suppose any one will question the fact, that in all countries and at all times, there live and die, remote from the bustle of public affairs, a number of men very superior to those who play a part on the world's stage, though often the mark of public scorn *. The venerable man, of whom we have been speaking, did not, however, live in obscurity; nor could he pass a single day, or perform a

* This just remark is to be found in Saint-Simon, narrowed, it is true, by his spirit of caste, which was a weakness in that author, but conceived in terms which one might believe had been applied to the Marquis John Anthony, were it not proved that Saint-Simon never knew him.

"Thus we see noblemen of signal merit spend their lives in ordinary occupations, though their lofty genius would sustain with dignity and glory the weight of the greatest affairs, both of peace and war, if birth and merit, were not certain causes of exclusion, especially when joined to a proud spirit which disdains to make its way by meanness, and acknowledges nothing but truth."—*Vol. IV. p.* 100, *edit.* 1829.

single action, which partook of mediocrity. But he needed both a wider field and a better historian. We do not undertake to offer him to the veneration of posterity *, but he must enjoy that of his own family; and happy would it be, if its members took him as their model, his actions as their example, and his virtues as their precepts!

* Mirabeau, in fact, never thought of publishing this notice.—*Editor.*

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK II.

We have explained the reasons which induced us to place at the commencement of this work the account written by Mirabeau of his ancestors, and principally John Anthony. The same motives induce us now to present to our readers the son of the latter, before we proceed to Mirabeau himself.

John Anthony had several children, four of whom died before him. Three sons survived him: these were Victor, who obtained great celebrity by his works, and was still better known as the father of the immortal Mirabeau; the Bailli of Mirabeau, who also enjoyed a high reputation; and Count Louis Alexander, who has left but few traces of his existence.

As the two first are entitled to a more detailed notice, because they will continually appear before our readers, in consequence of their intimate connection with almost every transaction of Mirabeau's life, we shall begin by briefly sketching the life of the third.

Louis Alexander was born on the 6th of October, 1724, and received Knight of Malta on the 7th of April following. He went through the usual studies and exercises of the young nobles of his time. His character partook of the impetuous singularities which so eminently distinguished his family. Some altercation occurred between him and his elder brother, relative to his share of the family property *. He passed rapidly through the inferior grades, and obtained the rank of captain in the king's regiment †. He was present at the battles of Dettingen, Fontenoy, Lawfeld, Rocoux, at the sieges of Menin, Ypres, Furnes, and at every other that took place during that war. It was after the peace ‡, that his extraordinary adventure with Mademoiselle Navarre took place. This young lady was a kind of kept mistress, who had run away from the harem of Marshal Saxe, and whom Louis Alexander married during the delirium of a blind passion. The whole of this romantic story is to be found in the memoirs which Marmontel wrote in his dotage, and in which he embellishes, with licentious tales, the *moral* lessons destined for his children. Notwithstanding

* Unpublished Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† He first served under the orders of the illustrious Vauvenargues, his relative and friend.

‡ The peace of Aix la Chapelle, concluded in 1748, and signed on the 18th and 23rd of October.

the singularity and interest of this event, we confine ourselves here to a brief extract *, because the full

* In the year 1748, Marmontel, at that time twenty-five years of age, became acquainted, at an evening party, with Mademoiselle Navarre, who, being desirous of seeing the young author of a successful tragedy (Dionysius the Tyrant), had him introduced to her by Monet, the manager of the comic opera. Although the passion with which this fascinating courtezan inspired Marmontel was not cruelly treated by the lady, it still took entire possession of his heart. During his stay with her in the country, he was tormented in every possible way by this woman, whose fantastic whims bordered upon madness. During a separation, which was to have been only temporary, she took another lover, the Chevalier Mirabeau, and very coolly came, accompanied by him, to pay a visit to Marmontel, whose account of the visit we here transcribe.

"I was still confined to my bed from the effect of my grief, when one morning I heard some one enter my room.

"'Who is there?' I said. I received no answer; but my curtains were drawn aside, and I felt myself embraced by a female, who, pressing her face upon mine, bedewed it with tears.

"'Who are you?' I again asked, but received no reply, and my visiter continued her caresses with tears and sighs. At length the person rose, and I recognised Mademoiselle Navarre, in a mourning deshabille, and in tears, which rendered her more lovely, more fascinating than ever.

"'Is it you, Mademoiselle?' I exclaimed, 'Alas! what brings you here? Do you wish to cause my death?'

"On uttering these words, I perceived behind her the Chevalier Mirabeau, silent and motionless. I fancied I was dreaming; but Mdlle. Navarre, turning towards him, exclaimed, in a tragic tone—

"'Behold, Sir, the man whom I have sacrificed for your sake,—the most passionate lover, the most tender, faithful friend I ever had in the world. Behold the state to which my love for you has reduced him, and confess how culpable you would be if ever you rendered yourself unworthy of so great a sacrifice!'

particulars of this strange anecdote would far exceed our limits *.

" 'Are you well enough to get up?' she asked. On my answering in the affirmative, she continued—

" 'Well, then, dress yourself, and let us have breakfast, for we want to ask your advice, and have many important things to communicate to you.'

" I immediately rose, and ordered coffee. As soon as we were alone, she said to me—

" 'My dear friend, we are going, the chevalier and I, to purify our love at the foot of the altar. We intend to marry, not in France, where we should experience too many obstacles, but in Holland, where we shall be free. Marshal Saxe is mad with jealousy; here is a letter he has written to me. He speaks slightingly of the chevalier, but the latter will obtain satisfaction for it.'

" I represented to her that a jealous man could scarcely be expected to be just towards his successful rival, and it would not be prudent nor indeed possible to attack the Marshal.

" 'What mean you by attacking?' she replied. 'A duel—sword in hand? That is by no means our intention. I have not made myself properly understood. The chevalier, after our marriage, intends entering the service of some foreign power. He is known: he may choose; and with his name, his valour, his talents, and his personal advantages, he cannot fail rapidly to attain the highest rank. He will shortly be seen at the head of armies, and it is in the field of battle that he will meet the marshal.'

" 'Excellently well imagined, Mademoiselle,' I replied; 'I approve of your project—it is noble, and worthy of you both.'

" They were indeed as proud and happy as if the plan was to be executed the very next day. I subsequently learnt, that after being married in Holland, they had passed through Avignon; that the chevalier's brother and enemy, the pretended 'Friend of Men,' had found means through his influence to have them pursued even into the papal dominions; that when the officers of justice came, by order of the vice-legate, to arrest them, the lady was in labour, and the

* For note, see next page.

Louis Alexander, whose character was seriously injured by this unfortunate marriage, quitted France immediately on becoming a widower, and entered the German army. He was raised to the dignity of grand chamberlain and privy councillor to the Margrave of

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fright she experienced on seeing the officers enter the house, brought on a disease that caused her death."

We must own, that notwithstanding all the details contained in the family correspondence, we have been unable to find the slightest indication of that abuse of influence of which Marmontel accuses the Marquis of Mirabeau; but we shall, in the course of our account, find plenty of grounds for such an imputation.

* When, in the course of this work, it will be seen how proud the Mirabeau family was of its ancient and pure nobility, the grief and anger which the first marriage of Alexander Louis must have caused his two elder brothers, will easily be conceived. In order not to dwell longer upon this episode, which is foreign to our subject, we shall merely extract from the family correspondence the following passage of a letter from the chevalier (afterwards bailli) of Mirabeau, then governor of Guadeloupe.

" My feelings and patience have just undergone a rude trial. I had scarcely finished the last word of my preceding paragraph, when a man entered, and requested my kind offices, saying that he had been intimately acquainted with one of my brothers. I asked him his name. He replied that he had some right to reckon upon my friendship, as his name was Navarre. My blood rushed from the very soles of my feet to my head. I, however, answered him coldly, and without betraying any emotion, that his name, as he ought to be perfectly well aware, was no recommendation to my friendship; that, however, I was a public man, and he should ever find in me that justice to which he might be entitled, without my recollecting whose brother he was, either in good or evil. I am still quite disconcerted at this visit, especially when I consider that the man is to become a resident in my government."—(*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 24th* 1753.)

Brandebourg-Bareuth, married a young German lady, Juliana Dorothea Silvia, born Countess of Kunsberg, and died prematurely on the 21st of July, 1761, without issue.

Louis Alexander's two elder brothers having exercised, as we have already stated, great influence over the life of Mirabeau, who was the son of Victor, we think it right to give a previous sketch of these two men, whose characters will be further developed in the course of this work.

The immediate predecessor of Louis Alexander was John Anthony, Joseph, Charles, Elzear, since known under the title of the Chevalier, and afterwards the Bailli of Mirabeau. He was born at Perthuis on the 8th of October 1717, and admitted Knight of Malta on the 31st of July 1720.

We shall merely give a very brief sketch of his private life, which he himself wrote in his memoirs, the energetic and unassuming veracity of which reduced to silence, according to evidence which exists in our hands, the hatred of the minister Berryer, whose persecution of the fearless narrator was the more relentless, because he was afraid of having him for a successor.

The Chevalier Mirabeau entered the corps of the galleys, as ensign, on the 15th of March 1730, being then twelve years and a half old. He served on board the galley "La France," during the rough winter of

1731. He was in active service from 1732 to 1737, was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant on the 1st of April, 1738, and was continually employed during the ensuing years. He was wounded in 1744, in the action of the Ciotat; in 1746 he was appointed lieutenant, and in the same year was wounded by a cannon-ball, and taken prisoner by the English. He served from the year 1747 to 1751, when he obtained the rank of captain. In 1752 he was appointed governor of Guadaloupe *, with the promise of having the gover-

* A few brief extracts will show the duties of that office, and the manner in which the Bailli of Mirabeau fulfilled them.

"What an office have I come here to fill! It is a terrible one for a lazy fellow like myself. I have already informed you that I am here jack-of-all-trades: governor, bishop, commandant, half intendant, half and even entirely president of the courts of justice. Honoured, at least outwardly, as a god and a half, the king himself is not greater at Versailles than I am here. I am feared like half a dozen provosts, perhaps hated; for the people here have little love in them. What a devil of an office! If you meet on your road some man of honour, who knows his duties, is anxious to fulfil them, and is desirous of becoming a prince, send him to this part of the world in order to correct him: he will soon be cured of his hankering after authority."

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"I have never desired the possession of immense wealth, and have never done any thing to acquire it, at which I ought to blush. I have simplified my duties, and reduced them to the most limited compass. Now, suppose your head servant's wages were insufficient in comparison to the labour you required of him, would he not give you warning? I think I shall do the same. I have here 12,000 francs of France, which are equal to about 8000 at Paris. With the obligation I am under of keeping up some state, judge

norship of the Windward Islands. In 1755, he returned home on account of ill health, and served during

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how I can manage. I am aware how ridiculous it is for a governor to be continually complaining of poverty. I perfectly well know the means of enriching myself, but God forbid I should ever experience the temptation of resorting to such means! I prefer, and I am convinced you think in that respect as I do, possessing no wealth, and having nothing to reproach myself with. * * * I fully perceive the turpitude of our affairs, and I should blush at being, on such terms, one of fortune's favourites. Public vice does not in anywise diminish the extent of my duties. God is my witness, that I yield as little as I can to human weakness; the poor are sure of finding a protector in me, innocence a supporter, and knavery a determined foe. This language may appear very singular from a younger brother of Provence; but here I am a sovereign. What heavy responsibility is this for a man who appreciates the extent of his duties! But I pray the Almighty to treat me as I treat others!"—*Unpublished Letters from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, March 22nd, April 6th* 1754.

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"Shall I tell you what was said of you yesterday in the Marshal's (de Belle-Isle) drawing-room, by a man who is listened to and believed? The government are extremely satisfied with the chevalier's management, and they fully appreciate his earnest desire to do well. The knaves, by no means few in number, tremble; honest men rejoice, and the poor know that justice will be done them, without any respect of persons. The doors of their governor are open to them, they say, at all hours; and the whole colony knows that not one of his retainers dares to prevent the poorest negro from telling his story to their master. They know that he will not accept of any present, nor possess ill-acquired wealth; that he has neither wife, nor mistress, nor friends; that he is truly a Melchisedec, who neither drinks nor games, nor lives in useless magnificence; in short, that he could fail in rendering justice except by mistake, and an error that comes not from the heart, is every where

the months of April, May, and June 1756, at the siege of Mahon, where he was severely wounded, and fell dangerously ill *. In 1758, 1759, 1760, and 1761,

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readily pardoned."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 27th* 1754.

"The other day I happened again to see our friend; I spoke to him of your want of means; he then mentioned a whole system of trade in which you might legally engage; he said that the Count of Toulouse had gained greatly by it, and that the Penthièvre family continued it to the present day. He added, that Marshal D'Estrées, born poor, and who left no debts at his death, had been enabled to support his lavish expenditure only by means of such trade, which he had carried on every where. I replied, that being officially appointed to superintend that branch of industry, you would be exposed to the attacks of calumny, when your only aim was to do justice; he observed, that we were nothing but simpletons, with our romantic notions and systems, and I remained silent."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 26th* 1754.

"Let them talk on," replied the Bailli; "your brother, wherever he has been or may be, cares for nothing but to do his best, and will always keep his conscience free from reproach, as an honest man, a citizen, and a Christian. As for fortune and success, he is quite satisfied to toss up heads or tails for them."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated April 19th* 1755.

* The following is an extract from a letter, which proves that, notwithstanding the severe wounds the Bailli received at the siege of Mahon, he retained all his serenity of mind, which sometimes showed itself in sallies of wit and humour. His brother having written to him respecting a copy of Virgil, to which he attached the usual importance of a great lover of books, the Bailli, whilst confined to his bed, thus answered him—

"With the exception of a few scratches received in travelling post, the Virgil you speak of enjoys good health. He followed me to

he was appointed inspector-general of the coast-guard of the provinces of Saintonge, Picardy, Normandy, and Britany. He was present, and ran the greatest dangers, at the attacks, by the English, on Rochefort, in September 1757; on Saint Malo, in June 1758; and on Saint Cast, in the month of August following. He was at Havre-de-Grace during the bombardment of that town by the English in August 1759. Deprived by the death of Marshal Belle-Isle* of a kind

Mahon, where he was neither killed nor wounded, and was not attacked with the dysentery."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, July 4th* 1756.

* Charles Louis Augustus Fouquet, Count of Belle-Isle, Marshal of France, Minister of State, &c. &c., born on the 22nd September 1684, died on the 26th January 1761. He was the grandson of Fouquet, the Minister of Finance, and was born at the period of his family's downfall and ruin; but he eventually rose to higher rank than any part of his family had ever enjoyed. His success was the more noble, because he owed it to his own exertions. The merit and destiny of this illustrious individual appear to us stated in a correct and lively manner, in the following extract from a rather unconnected assemblage of detached notes, most of which were written by Mirabeau, in the Donjon of Vincennes, and which the Abbé Soulevie collected into an ill-digested work, published under the title of "Memoirs of the Duke of Aiguillon's administration."

"Marshal Belle-Isle, who was no less extraordinary by the losses which it was his fate to endure (his brother was killed at the battle of Exiles, in 1745, and his only son, the Count of Gisors, fell at the battle of Crevelt, on the 16th of June 1758, at the age of seven and twenty), than by his successes, the diversity of events which marked his career, and the variety of his talents, all of a superior kind, but by no means extraordinary, united in his person every honour to which a subject can aspire. Examine him

and discerning patron, and exposed to the hatred and jealousy of the minister Berryer, the Chevalier Mirabeau retired to Malta *. He accepted of the generalship of the galleys †, and he thus terminated, without

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in his career, examine him when he attained the goal: no one was ever better calculated to succeed in the world, and no one ever met with more powerful obstacles. No one ever had such opportunities of enjoyment, and none ever experienced more bitter troubles. He was one of the men whose elevation was the most brilliant, and excited the greatest jealousy. From the citadel of Pignerol, where Fouquet seemed destined to bury his family, to the Embassy to Frankfort, how many obstacles, how many prejudices, how much resistance was it not necessary to conquer!—(Page 197.)

* During the first year of the Bailli's residence at Malta, he became acquainted with a man, who was then young and unknown, but afterwards acquired a well-earned celebrity.

"My letter will be delivered to you by a young man who returns to France, having come to this colony as a geographical engineer. He has been played the fool with here by the French engineers and officers, under the sanction of a piece of meanness emanating from the officers at Versailles. This poor young man will call on you on his arrival. He has sense and information; his conduct is very correct, and he is unfortunate. These are sufficient claims to a kind interest in his behalf. His name is 'Saint-Pierre,' and he belongs to a good family of Havre."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated Malta, August* 31*st* 1761.

We find no further mention of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre than the few words which follow:—

"I have seen your young protégé, who appears to me a sort of amphibious engineer. I will do what I can for him with Trudaine."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, November* 20*th* 1761.

† This high office was temporary, and lasted only two years; but the holder had the faculty of retaining it two years more, which,

any reward, the career of danger and fatigue which, during thirty-one years, he had pursued in the royal navy.

The Bailli of Mirabeau was a very witty and sensible man, well informed, virtuous, kind, and feeling; but austere, profoundly religious, proud, and of inflexible firmness. His memoirs, from which we have

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however, was seldom exercised, on account of the unavoidable expenses. The bailli, who had no other fortune than his share of his father's inheritance, and a trifling pension, had been enabled to maintain the dignity of the generalship only by borrowing 150,000 francs from the marquis, and his intention was to retire immediately into private life. During his generalship he acquired, as he did everywhere, the esteem and affection of his subordinates. He received a proof of these feelings, which may be considered not only truly affecting, but almost unprecedented.

"I have already abandoned the general's palace, which is in a state of preparation for my successor. The poor men employed in the galleys have paid me a compliment, which has raised in me the liveliest and most agreeable emotion. They told me, and it was the royal pilot, their natural chief, who informed me of the circumstance, that the inhabitants of the borough in which they resided wished to club together to defray the expenses of the generalship, provided I would continue. I declined the offer, as you may well conceive; but their kindness has greatly affected me."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, November 20th* 1764.

We find, in a letter written about the same period, one of the bailli's secrets for making himself beloved by his inferiors.

"If ever it became my duty to put men in their right places, I would consult the voice of the people. I wish the Crosses of Saint Louis were awarded by the soldiers. Let n er injustice nor weakness be shown towards our inferiors, and every n will be the idol of l subordinates. The unjust man will be abl t l ."
—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the*

just extracted, and the numerous fragments of correspondence which we shall present to our readers, show that there is nothing more likely than the anecdote of him mentioned by Mirabeau *, relative to a circumstance which took place on the 15th of October 1755, at the toilette of Madame de Pompadour.

As a naval officer, he evinced great talents; as a military man, he displayed the most brilliant valour;

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* In the "Original Letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes," vol. ii. page 317 of the original edition, Paris, Garnery, 1792, 4 vols. 8vo. (the numerous extracts which we shall give are taken from this edition), is the following:—

"The Abbé, afterwards Cardinal Bernis, wished to bring the Chevalier Mirabeau into the administration. The essential preliminary step was to effect a reconciliation between him and the Marchioness of Pompadour. The chevalier, one of the handsomest and most intellectual men of his day, was introduced at her toilette. For a length of time he carried on a witty and brilliant conversation calling forth all his natural and acquired talents; in a word, he was 'charming,' and from a 'charming man' to a minister of state, you may conceive that, under certain circumstances, the distance is not great. In one of those moments of infatuation which lead your respectable sex to act by fits and starts, Madame de Pompadour said to the chevalier,—

"'What a pity it is that all you Mirabeaus are such hot-brained men!'

"The Chevalier Mirabeau immediately resumed all the roughness of the sailor, and retorted in these remarkable words:—

"'It is true, Madam, that such is the title of legitimacy in our house; but wise and cool brains have been guilty of so many follies, and have ruined so many kingdoms, that it would not be perhaps very imprudent to make a trial of hot brains. At all events, they certainly could not do worse.'"

as governor of Guadaloupe, and afterwards as inspector-general of the ports and sea coasts, he displayed abilities of the first order. But he was deficient in those means which ensure success at court: his mind was in every respect in strict conformity with the imposing severity of his appearance. Versailles, and Paris, and the life of a courtier, inspired him with an aversion half feudal, half republican, which almost amounted to a mania. Sufficiently proud of the antiquity of his race, evincing undisguised contempt for the equivocal upstart nobility of certain ministers, and the pedantic but powerful plebeian clerks; fully sensible of the length and utility of his own services; upright, disinterested, true, and even inclined to censure,—he adopted, in the steps he took, neither the active zeal, the indefatigable assiduity, nor the obsequious patience which ensure success. Being designated by the unanimous and loudly expressed wish of the navy, first, as an assistant to the ministry, and afterwards, as minister, on the retirement of M. de Moras, he did nothing to obtain office, so difficult to come at, nothing to assist his friends, nothing to distance his competitors. He very soon resigned the high but distant employments to which the able tactics of the men in power wished to confine him, and which, fatiguing and unproductive as they were, ruined his health without increasing his fortune.

From this period, he devoted himself entirely to the

interests of his order, and rendered himself so useful, and so entirely gained the confidence of every one, that it was proposed to raise him to the sovereign dignity, which he refused in 1770, on the death of the grand-master Pinto, and in 1773, on the death of the grand-master Ximénes, his intimate friend *. He was appointed, at a very late period of his life, to the commandery of Sainte Eulalie, in Rouergue †, and he devoted the income arising from this office to the repayment of large advances made to him by his brother the Marquis, also to pay the latter a considerable yearly contribution, in order to alleviate the heavy expenses that weighed upon him, and finally, to the forming of a rich library ‡ at the family residence. He indulged

* Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 13th 1765. Another letter from the same to the same, December 3rd 1770.

† On the 15th of June, 1766, in the place of the Bailli of Teucin, who, openly aspiring to the sovereign dignity, and fearing the competition of the Bailli of Mirabeau, had formerly intrigued against him with greater inveteracy, because the grand-master Pinto was ninety years of age.

‡ A voluminous catalogue, in our possession, and in the handwriting of the Bailli, proves that this collection of books was of considerable value. We have heard it related on the spot, that in 1793, when Mirabeau was declared a traitor to the revolution, some neighbours of his, who did not reckon honesty among the virtues they professed, came from Manosque to plunder the castle. Several reached the library, which was a vast gallery on the first floor, receiving the light from a range of windows opening into the interior court, and one of them placed immediately over a well two hundred feet deep, excavated in the solid rock upon which

in acts of benevolence of all kinds, at Mirabeau, Perthuis, Aix, Malta, Sainte Eulalie, indeed at every place where he spent any part of his revered and honoured old age; but he conferred his bounty with care and judgment.

He always remained strongly attached to his brother, whom, in his affection and respect, he almost idolised, although he by no means coincided in his illusions, his whims, and his systems of economy. The Bailli was always the confidant, sometimes the mild opponent, but oftener still the warm apologist of his brother.

Often, upon the statements of the Marquis, he accused with vehemence the weak and persecuted, whom afterwards, when he had made personal inquiries, which led him to follow the impulse of his reason and his heart, he defended with a zeal sometimes timid and patient, sometimes vehement and courageous. In a word, his life was entirely mixed up with that of his brother, and without partaking of the errors of the latter, he partook of his misfortunes. Being able to enjoy in his peaceable retirement what he termed *otium cum dignitate*, his generous self-denial threw

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the castle was built. One of these worthies, neither of whom probably could read (a talent in those days sufficiently rare in that part of the country, and which, we sincerely hope, is not so now), took it into his head to fling into the well some of these new-fashioned projectiles. He succeeded, and this prowess exciting a patriotic emulation, the six thousand volumes composing the library soon found their way to the bottom of the well, where they still remain.

him into tumultuous debates, and lamentable family dissensions. He was, we repeat it, a really superior man, gifted with admirable wisdom and probity; but he was neglected and unknown, and his rare qualities were of no advantage to his fortune, nor his virtues to his happiness.

The eldest of the surviving sons* of the Marquis John Anthony, was Victor† de Riqueti, Marquis of

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* Two brothers had preceded him: John Francis, born in 1709, who died young; and Victor, Knight of Malta, ensign in the regiment of Mirabeau, born in 1710.

"A fatal accident cost my eldest brother his life. He was already an officer in my father's old regiment, and a young man of great promise. He was not only beloved, but adored by every body. He possessed very ardent passions, such as nature has implanted in the blood of our race; but all were of the more amiable sort. His heart was the most affectionate possible, and his mind so noble as to delight all who knew him."—*Unpublished Family Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

The preceding extract, as may be seen, is a completion of the note which we have placed at the bottom of page 169, of the first Book, comprising the life of John Anthony, Marquis of Mirabeau. This second note would be almost a repetition of the first, were we to transcribe it textually. In our extracts we shall avoid as much as possible such redundancies, which frequently escaped the Marquis, especially in those writings which he destined for his family.

† And not Philip, as stated by the elder Gassicourt, in his "Essai sur la Vie privée d'Honoré Gabrielle de Requetti. Paris, Year VIII., page 4 (first edition), and page 2 of the second edition published in 1820." At the end of this second edition there is a note, in which the author complains of having been copied by Publicola Chaussard, who has also placed a "Summary of the Life of Mirabeau" before a compilation entitled "Esprit de Mirabeau."

Mirabeau. He was born at Perthuis, in Provence, on the 5th of October 1715, two brothers having preceded him, who died under age. He was received as a knight of Malta on the 1st of September, 1718. He entered the army at the age of fourteen as ensign, and became captain of grenadiers in the regiment of Duras, of which his father, John Anthony, had been colonel, and who sold out in 1712 to the Marquis of Gensac.

Placed in the army at this early age, Victor distinguished himself at the sieges of Kehl and Philipsburgh, at the attack upon the lines of Dettingen, where he received a wound, and in the battles of Hisperberg and Clausen. He made the campaign of Bavaria in 1742, and was decorated with the Cross of St. Louis in 1743*.

The reproach would appear plausible, because the elder Gassicourt quotes an edition of the "Esprit de Mirabeau," dated 1804 (Paris Fr. Buisson, Year XII), posterior, consequently, to the "Essai sur la Vie privée," which, as we have just said, was published in Year VIII. But unfortunately the complainant was ignorant of the existence of a first edition of the "Esprit de Mirabeau," which appeared in Year V. (Paris, Fr. Buisson, Year V, 1795) and by comparing this with the later work of the elder Grassicourt, the reader is tempted to retort the question, and to charge the accuser. The real plagiarist, whoever he was, only exposed his own deficiencies, for the Essay like the Summary, and the Summary like the Essay, are but poor specimens of biography, and contain a great number of errors, which are strong evidence of a shallow knowledge of the subject, proving that the authors must have written without care, research, or critical attainments.

* It is a singular fact, that the insignia of the Order of St. Louis are not to be found in the many portraits of the Marquis of Mirabeau, three of which have been engraved. The same thing

On the 27th of May 1737, Victor, then only twenty-one years and six months old, became chief of the family, by the death of the Marquis John Anthony, who left only annuities to his widow and his two other sons*. Henceforward Victor cared little about the profession of arms, which he had embraced without any decided vocation, from pure filial submission, and which he intended, as it were, merely to travel through, like all the other of the young nobles, but without remaining a soldier for life.

"I did," says he, "all I could to quit the service, from the time I saw, in 1740, the determination of the cardinal† to refuse me everything, and was informed that it arose from personal animosity. Never-

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occurs in the portraits of his brothers, the Bailli and the Count. The Bailli wore only the grand cross of Malta, as the Marquis wore only the medal of the order of Vasa, and neither enumerated in his long list of titles, that of knight of St. Louis. Must it be inferred that these proud nobles attached but little importance to a distinction that could be obtained by plebeians?

* "My father left by his will four thousand livres per annum to my mother for life, and to each of his younger sons fifteen hundred livres a year for life, and ten thousand livres in cash, payable upon their becoming of age. He said in his will, that although he thought he had done them justice, he begged of them, in case it did not so appear to them, to consider the great expense he had incurred for their reception at Malta during their minority, at a time when specie bore a very high premium in France, which rendered the purchase of Spanish pistoles more expensive."—*Unpublished Private Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

† Cardinal Fleury.

theless, M. d' Angervilliers* detained me. I would no longer remain with my regiment, although leave of absence and reliefs† were always readily granted to me. But at last, when the war began, I found myself engaged, in spite of myself. I then thought that I must make another campaign, in order not to retire with a bad grace. At the commencement of the year 1742, I was in Bavaria, having fitted myself out at Strasburg as aide-de-camp to Marshal Broglie; but it was to no purpose, for the Marshal never joined us. On my return to Paris in December 1742, I attempted to negociate an affair (the purchase of a regiment), which ought naturally to have attached me to the army; but the little interest created in the metropolis by the critical state of the military of France, prejudiced me strongly against the profession‡. I therefore adhered to my previous resolution of honourably quitting the profession of my forefathers §."

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* War Secretary under Louis XV. He is mentioned in the life of John Anthony, page 145.

† In the style of military ordinances, these are orders of the King, authorising the drawing by absent officers of the pay which accrues during their absence.

‡ " In consequence of my having left the army in 1742, with leave of absence from the General only, an annoyance was practised upon me which disgusted me entirely. It was pretended that a man like me required leave of absence from the Court."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July* 18*th* 1754.

§ Domestic Memoirs, already quoted.

Having thus taken his resolution, and given up his commission on the 7th of March 1743, Victor resigned the Cross of Malta, and on the 21st of April, in the same year, married Mary Genevieve of Vassan *, more recommendable by the advantages of birth and fortune than by beauty of person. She was born December 3rd, 1725, was married on the 10th December 1737, to John Francis de Ferrières, Marquis of Saulvebeuf, and became a widow the following year, this first marriage never having been consummated.

It was not disgust alone for a military life, and the fear either of remaining without promotion, or of ruining himself to attain it, that led to the premature retirement of the Marquis of Mirabeau from the army: his true motive was, that having made some excellent studies conjointly with his second brother, the Chevalier, afterwards Bailli of Mirabeau, he had early resolved to devote himself exclusively to the labours of the closet.

We have, in fact, evidence, that from 1737, when he was scarcely yet two-and-twenty, he turned his attention to political economy, wrote some large

* And not Louise de Caraman, as is written by some biographers who have copied each other. If they had read attentively the letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, which contain the only true particulars published up to this time concerning the family, they would have seen, in vols. iii. page 77, and iv. pages 138 and 167, that there never were any alliances nor relationship between the Riqueti of Caraman and the Riqueti of Mirabeau; they would also have seen the reason why.—*Editor.*

volumes of private memoirs, and traced out for his posterity, which was not to exist till ten years later *, plans, injunctions, and instructions, curious from the dogmatical spirit which he displayed all his life without ever softening or humanising it, and from the ostensible style which he adopted for the public.

We say ostensible, because his familiar letters, of which we have thousands, and which are all remarkable for their copiousness and ease, and for a freedom both witty and jocular, form, as our readers will presently perceive, the most inexplicable of contrasts with those writings destined for publication. These were composed, as it were, in the public presence, and in them his ideas, always at bottom sound and sensible, are counter-

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* Our documents on this head go no further back than 1737, but it appears that the Marquis had commenced two years previously.

"I have always kept a memorandum of every thing, preserved every thing, and given an account of every thing. At twenty I spoke and wrote already to those who will succeed me." —*Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, November 29th* 1779. The marquis so well preserved every thing, that without counting his original works, he left at his death more than four hundred folio volumes of copies. He one day wrote to his brother:—

"If I should happen to die, how surprised would you, my books, my collections, and my affairs be, to find yourselves obliged to live together. I often laugh at the idea."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated October 18th* 1783. The preservation of a part of this immense collection has furnished us with the prodigious number of extracts from manuscript contained in, or rather which compose the first part of this work.—*Editor.*

balanced by the peculiar quality of his obscure*, heavy, and whimsical style, consisting of a confusion of tropes and incoherent metaphors, or, to speak more plainly, for we must tell the truth, by his intolerable bombast.

This decided inclination to literary pursuits, caused him to leave his native province, where not only the intellectual nourishment, suitable to his taste, was wanting, but an object for his ambition, an opening for literary fame, which he considered himself sure of obtaining †. He was, nevertheless, induced to return

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* His brother, the Bailli, sometimes hinted this defect to him, but without doing any good. We shall give but two instances.

"Your 'Economiques' have afforded me pleasure, but I wish that you could, or rather that you would, write in a manner more suitable to the general reader; for I, that am accustomed to your phraseology, have often been obliged to read over and over again, and sometimes to guess more than I understand."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, March 27th* 1770. "Take notice, therefore, that your style of writing is not clear, even for the well-informed; and that your figures render your works untranslatable into foreign languages." *Unpublished Letter by the same to the same, December 7th* 1779.

† It appears, however, that the Marquis of Mirabeau hesitated for some time to publish his works.

"As indefatigable in my labours as M. de Belle-Isle in his, I have manuscripts by me which would fill your gallery. I have brought out for the use of the public only that little work on Provincial States, and a certain Analysis which you have read, and which is a tribute to friendship." This analysis was the emphatic commentary upon the poetry of Le Franc of Pompignan, which La Harpe has justly ridiculed. (*Cours de Litterature,* vol. xiii. page 168 of the first edition.) "But I have not been less amused in composing all the rest. I do not wish for literary honours, for

for a short time to Provence for the essential interests of his fortune, by the wish of his venerable mother, who never quitted him *, and by the persevering and reasonable solicitations of his brother. But, independently of the motives derived from his pretensions and his philosophic and literary hopes, a characteristic reason urged him ultimately to desert the province of his ancestors.

"There no longer existed that attachment and respect for ancient families whose power is now unknown †: men no longer prostrated themselves before the old nobles and the grandees of Malta ‡; in short, the province conquered entirely by the inkstand ||, con-

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the reason that all honours whatsoever render us actors upon a theatre exposed to the unquenchable malignity of the audience."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 27th* 1756, addressed to the Countess of Rochefort, Maria-Thérésa of Brancas, married a second time, October 14th 1782, to Louis Julius Babon Mancini, Duke of Nivernois, born in 1716, and who died in 1798. His second wife, of whom we now speak, died six-and-twenty days after this marriage.

Let us observe, that the Marquis of Mirabeau did not long maintain this resolution, for it was in the following year that he published his principal work, "The Friend of Men."—*Editor.*

* She died May 26th 1769, at the age of 84. From the commencement of her widowhood, that is to say, during thirty-two years, she resided with her eldest son, who never ceased to pay her the attention dictated by the most lively tenderness and filial piety, carried to a pitch which would not be understood now-a-days.—*Editor.*

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, August 23rd 1770.

‡ Idem.

|| Letter from the same to the same, dated December 29th 1770.

tained more animals armed with pens than twenty-two highly civilised kingdoms ought to possess; for this species is the most venomous and epidemic for a feudal lord *."

In 1740, he purchased the estate of Bignon, in the Gâtinais (six leagues from Sens and Nemours), in order to be in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, although on the other hand "the estates near Paris do not suit the upper ranks, being subject to the laws of plebeians, and liable to constant changes of proprietors *." Two years subsequently he took an hotel at Paris; and thus the man so respectful to the memory of his fathers, who had pertinaciously attached themselves to Provence ever since 1267, not one being willing to fix his establishment elsewhere, quitted that country for ever.

Then commenced the career of labour, to which he sincerely believed he had a special vocation ‡.

This expression, which frequently occurs in the correspondence between the Marquis and the Bailli of Mirabeau, is a burlesque and disdainful allusion to the gentlemen of the long robe, of finance, and of public offices, so hated and despised by the nobles of this stamp. Mirabeau himself made use of this expression upon several occasions, especially in his "Lettres de Cachet," vol. i. page 330.

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli, dated October 23rd 1770.

† Unpublished Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

‡ "Say, now, am I wrong, since my memory is retentive of objects which my heart and conscience approve, since my vocation is known to me, and my duty marked out, to have promised inwardly to employ my whole life, my humble talents and the introductions

We shall run rapidly through the history of his affairs, his domestic life, and his works.

However liberally portioned as eldest of the family, the Marquis of Mirabeau never had so considerable a fortune as has been stated*; and such as it was, it was

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which rank affords me, although I have not deserved them, in promoting, by all the means in my power, that which I am confident is the useful truth, those simple principles which I know to be capable of working the happiness of my fellow-creatures? It will take, to-day, to-morrow, or never, but I shall have accomplished my task of charity. So long as my constitution permits me to write, so long as age and decency suffer me to appear in places where I can be heard with effect, there shall I be seen and heard. When the sinews of nature inform me of the necessity of retirement, I will then go and practise charity towards my country neighbours. Such is my mission, such are my aërial castles."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau.*

* Mirabeau himself was very ill-informed or very unjust on this head. For instance, it is certain that until 1771, that is to say, during eight-and-twenty years, the Marquis did not enjoy his wife's fortune, nor did he receive the slightest assistance from it in educating and settling their children. After that period, constant law-suits destroyed all the expectations he had formed with regard to this property, which was considerable, it is true, but encumbered and involved in litigation.

A single extract will suffice to explain the error so generally prevalent with regard to the Marquis of Mirabeau's fortune.

"My father's noble manners, his mode of living, of obliging, and in fine of existing, had given people such a high idea of him, that no sooner did I become heir to his fortune, than I was assailed on all sides with questions about it, connected with proposals of marriage and other matters. As I was always very sincere on the subject, and there were occasions even where I was obliged to speak out, I was not believed when I stated things as they were. My

seriously injured by the state of abandonment in which he left his principal estates in Provence, to the ravages of the climate, the Durance, and especially by aids to the commonalties "through the triumphant rule of the inkstand*." Further, these estates were deteriorated by ruinous agricultural experiments, by the unprofitable and expensive undertaking of working mines, by the successive settlement of his children, especially his daughters, for whom he found the best matches in two provinces. One of the causes of the greatest shock his fortune sustained, was the obstinacy with which he pursued his intention of forming two branches in the family. He set about purchasing large estates, at such a distance from each other, that it was found necessary to sell them again. For instance, he bought the Duchy of Roquelaure, in Gascony, the title of which he hoped, perhaps, to obtain. This was a singular and disastrous mania, upon which remonstrances were of no avail; and its effects were such, that the expenses of conveyance and registration amounted to very considerable sums, which the profits of selling again seldom covered†.

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father was considered twice as rich at least."—*Unpublished Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.*

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 16th 1763.

† "Nobody knows better than I do the losses arising from such employment of capital; for no one in my station has done so much in that way as I have. It cannot have cost me less than two hundred thousand francs in the course of my life for expenses of notaries,

His domestic life presents but few events, during a period of fifteen years, in the course of which eleven children were born, from a union hitherto as peaceful as it had been fruitful. In 1757, the death of the Marquis of Vassan, father of the Marchioness of Mirabeau, called her to Limousin, whither she went, unaccompanied by her husband, who was detained in the metropolis, or near it, by his illusions as a writer who wished to become chief of a literary sect. Pecuniary difficulties, imprudent maternal suggestions, pernicious advice, a natural impetuosity, easily excited by the perverseness of those by whom he was beset, quarrels, and respective grievances, produced between the husband and wife seeds of discord, which rapidly sprang up into reciprocal hatred. During this period, Madame de Pailly, already for a long time past preferred to the Marchioness, came to reside at Bignon. Her influence was destined to last for the remainder of the Marquis's life. She was equally dangerous from the power arising from her youth, her beauty, and her artful disposition. The resentment of the Marchioness burst forth. Acts of odious despotism responded to her vehement but just complaints. Her rage knew no bounds: a furious enmity and a scandalous lawsuit were the consequence during fifteen years more; and this lamentable subversion of a bond formed under happy auspices, poisoned

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brokerage, banking, &c."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 20th* 1766.

the remainder of their lives, broke up a highly respected family, and rendered the children, as it were, orphans. They now wanted a mother naturally predisposed to excuse before their father, the ignorance or levity of their youthful years, and to temper for them the severity of their lessons, the bitterness of reproach, and the rigour of paternal chastisement. This event threw the greater number of their children into a career of life attended with unlimited danger, disorder, wanderings, and misfortunes.

With regard to the various works of the Marquis of Mirabeau, the occasion, the subjects, the number, and the importance are well known. Those relating to finance and political economy, always mysterious, little accessible, and therefore little known, excited a curiosity kept alive by the circumstance of their novelty, by the boldness of contemporary writers, and by the warmth and vehemence of the controversies to which they gave rise*. No doubt the theory of the

* This curiosity extended to his person, as he confesses, with feigned humility, in a letter to the Countess of Rochefort, who proposed to conduct him to the French Academy on the day of the Duke of Nivernois' reception.

"Madam, I should not like to miss the opportunity of witnessing, on this day, my master's triumph, and you must therefore be so good as to take me up on your way, or inform me of the mode of introduction; for I am a silly man, and unless I am led to this Tribune, there will be a repetition of what occurred to me on M. de Pompignan's day, when my appearance and figure occasioned all of a sudden so great a bustle in the room, that everybody stood up to

economists was not very consistent, since on the one hand it deduced all political rights from landed property,—a principle essentially feudal, and establishing the despotism of great land-owners; while, on the other hand, it attacked the feudal abuses injurious to agriculture. But this inconsistency was alone sufficient to attach the Marquis of Mirabeau to a doctrine, by which a powerful nobleman reconciled the advantages of feudalism that still remained, to the benefits of a high sounding philanthropy. He also embraced the theories of Dr. Quesnay, became his apostle, and soon aspired to and succeeded in becoming his successor, as chief of the sect. The station of the Marquis in society, his fortune, greater in appearance than in reality, his influence at court*, the sweeping loftiness of his doctrines, even the confused originality of his style, which partook of the Gothic of Montaigne, without possessing his liveliness and grace, and of the raciness of Saint Simon † without his candour, his vigour, or his

have the satisfaction of inspecting me. Nevertheless, my complexion had not yet been purified by the waters of Vincennes."—*Unpublished letter, dated April 13th 1761, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.*

* He numbered among his most intimate friends Marshal Belle-Isle, Ponchartrain, Maurepas, Choiseul, Nivernois, Malesherbes, Bernis, and many others.

† This resemblance could be only the effect of chance, or of some partial similarity in intellectual conformation; for, as is well known, the first and extremely incomplete edition of the Memoirs of Saint Simon was published only in 1788.

precision, procured the Marquis of Mirabeau a great number of adherents and enemies. Among the latter, the farmers general, more excited by a bitter resentment which they did not avow, than by the fears which they feigned, obtained, in 1760, an order, that the marquis should be imprisoned in the Donjon of Vincennes*, on account of his "Theorie de l'Impôt;"

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* And not in the Bastille, as has been several times erroneously stated, especially by La Harpe, in his "Cours de Littérature," first edition, vol. 15, page 280; also by the author of the article concerning the Marquis of Mirabeau, in the "Biographie Universelle," vol. 29, page 88, 2nd column; and by the compiler of the notice inserted at page 2007 of "Petite Biographie Universelle," styled classical, and extracted by General Beauvais from the large work, published in 52 volumes, from 1811 to 1828, by Michaud, brothers. The author has anticipated the effect of the present work.

"This picture," he says, "necessarily exposes so many actual, palpable, and terrible truths for our vampires, that it will be a prodigy of civic courage to have dared so much, and of good fortune if it passes off without greater rumour than before. Whatever may arise from it, I run the risk, influenced as I am by a feeling founded upon principles superior to little passing emotions. This last essay was wanting to complete my vocation, and by it I would finish my career."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, October 19th 1760.*

"If they are angry at it, so much the worse for them. For my own part, if I were to become prime minister to-morrow, I would desire that my work took precedence of me; and would pay particular attention to creating similar ones."—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, November 18th 1760.*

"My curious work has appeared. At all risks, I took some copies to my friends at Versailles, and they immediately presented them at Paris. There is Nivernois (the duke), who has sent me, by special messengers, sermons on twelve points, which I had myself

a fictitious punishment, which was reduced to a detention of five days (from the 19th to the 24th of Decem-

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written and re-written, all so simple and so well-founded on reason, that I have nothing to reply, unless it be that prudence and the state of things are not yet quite in unison. At last I was obliged to promise him, from regard for him and Malesherbes, who is afraid that I should suspend the sale until it is seen how it takes at Versailles, in order not to excite a combination of murmurings between politics and interest. I have therefore promised and executed what nevertheless I felt to be a folly, since in keeping the work back, I admit that which would have remained a question quite long enough to have got rid of the entire first edition, as well as to give it that vogue among the little, which alone has supported me in my other essays against the suspicion of desiring evil."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, December 9th* 1760.

We here state some particulars, with which the Marquis himself has supplied us, upon his state of mind during his imprisonment, and also when he was liberated.

" I have been badly advised, I admit, in pointing out with too much harshness, the evil that exists and the good that might be done. When the animals hunting entreated the lion to divide the game, they did not say to him, ' Friend lion,' but ' My lord lion.' The mane may be of cotton, but the claw is not, and it is the latter which makes the impression."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 22nd* 1760.

" When I undertake to walk upon the stilts of misfortune, I shall be so awkward that you will laugh with that smile of pity which, I trust, I shall never cost you. As a man of rank and fortune, I should be very sorry that the king thought me a bad subject; but I am assured, from good and highly creditable authority, that after having given me a rap on the knuckles, in order to teach me better how to hold my pen, he would do me no further mischief. I ought likewise to grieve for having caused scandal; but when I was a child, and had blackened the eye of my schoolfellow, I used to say that I had not done it on purpose, and then dismiss it from my thoughts.

ber), followed by an exile of some weeks at Bignon (from the 26th of December to the 20th of February).

I am now doing the same, and on that account have confessed everything. But I am a good creature, and shall remain so,—very free, very candid, very friendly, a very good sort of man *, and having no more confidence in my celebrity than in judicial astrology."—*Unpublished letters from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.*

" Confess that, simpleton as I must sometimes appear to you, I did not select ill my companions of captivity. I took to Vincennes only my Marcus Aurelius, ' The wisdom of Solomon,' and a very curious little book of provincial proverbs,—a rare choice, jovial, and, above all, instructive. The latter I will own was the first I opened after they had locked me in, and my servant was very much surprised to find me laughing alone four minutes after."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated January 6th* 1761.

Let us add that the account in Peuchet's Life of Mirabeau, published at Paris, Bossange, 1824, four volumes 8vo, vol. 1, p. 18, where he relates the proceedings, solicitations, and recantations of the Marquis to recover his liberty, is pure invention. The only thing true in it, is that the Marchioness showed great zeal and tenderness on behalf of her husband.

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* It is assuredly strange to see the Marquis calling himself " a very good sort of man." This is not the only instance, and it cannot be denied that there were traces of " goodness" in this singular and condictory character. We insert here two passages, from letters in which he adverts to this definition of his character:—

" And I also, Madam, all heavy and stiff as you see me, I preached at three years' old; at six, I was a prodigy; at twelve, an object of hope; at twenty, a fireship; at thirty, a politician in theory; at forty, I am no more than a good kind of man. I have felt every change of this periodical growth, and have congratulated myself upon it even to the very last notch."—*Unpublished letter from the*

In the number of his adherents were then and afterwards to be found men illustrious in letters and science, and even crowned heads,—namely, the Margrave of Baden *; Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany; Leopold, (Emperor of Germany in 1790); Stanislaus Augustus, King of Poland; Gustavus III, King of Sweden, who twelve years after sent to the Marquis of Mirabeau the medal of the order of Vasa. It was even stated that the Dauphin, son of Louis XV, was among the number. This prince, termed "the Friend of Men," "the breviary of honest men;" he knew it, they say, by heart, and offered to make the author under tutor to his sons; but the marquis replied, as it is said, "that he would accept of nothing less than the entire responsibility." We adopt this tradition the more readily, as it is confirmed by a passage in one of the Marquis's letters.

"My principles," he wrote, "are, that in public matters determination is necessary. *Aut Cæsar, aut*

Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated December 27th 1756.

"Know that the last who speaks is always in the right with me; that I am constantly told I am too foolish; also, that my servants say, 'Oh, my master is good. My wife also says, 'He is a very good kind of man, and nothing more.' C' est un bon homme, et rien de plus.'"—*Unpublished letter from the same to the same, March 16th 1757.*

* To whom the marquis, twenty-five years after, bequeathed his manuscripts.

nihil. My conditions are, in the event of their being accepted, which is not very likely, for it would not be just to expect that they should appoint coachmen to flog themselves,—my conditions, I say, would be, first, that you should be at your place*; secondly, that I should have the office and title of superintendent, with absolute power over that department, having to treat with the master alone, or supposing he would have another person, with the dauphin; thirdly, that none of the operations should be submitted to the council; and fourthly, that I should have permission to retire the first time I found myself obstructed, without being called upon to give a reason,—reputation being the first of properties, and the only one which, with honour and conscience, cannot be sacrificed to a master; and being too old for fortune henceforward to be able to indemnify me for a compromise of reputation †."

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* That is to say, that he should fill the office of Minister of Marine, to which the Bailli was called by the wish of the navy, and which he would have obtained but for the death of the Marquis of Belle-Isle.—*Editor.*

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 23rd 1759.

An analysis of the works of the Marquis of Mirabeau would be a long undertaking, which we shall not, and indeed could not attempt. We shall confine ourselves to giving a catalogue of those which we have, according to bibliographers, but not according to the books themselves, all of which we have not in our possession, and it would be very difficult to get them together.

1746. Some bibliographers attribute to the Marquis of Mirabeau

To sum up the life of a man whose character will be seen but too well in the course of this work, the

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a participation in the "Journey to Languedoc and Provence, performed in 1740, by MM. le F. (Le Franc of Pompignan) the M. of M. (the Marquis of Mirabeau), and the Abbé de M. (Monville). Amsterdam, Chareau, &c. 1746, 12mo. We can affirm that nothing in this frivolous and obscene work, with the exception of a few verses, is worthy of M. le Franc of Pompignan, and that no part of it was written by the Marquis of Mirabeau, who is mentioned in it by name, as well as his two brothers. According to a note to page 191, vol. i. of a modern edition (Paris, Chaumerot, 1805—1808), this narrative was addressed to the Marchioness of Mirabeau, mother of the "Friend of Men." The supposition that such a book was dedicated to the most austere woman of her time, is equally true with the appellation given to the Marchioness, whom the annotator calls the Countess of Caraman, a name that no female of the house of Mirabeau ever bore.

1750. "Mémoire concernant l'Utilité des Etats Provinceaux relativement à l'Autorité Royale." Rome (France) 1750, 12mo.; republished in 1757, and since with notes in the collection entitled "Objets présentée à l'Assemblée des Notables; par de zélés Citoyens; premier objet: *Administrationes Provincialis*. Paris de l'Imprimerie Polytype, 1787," 8vo, 70 pages.

1755. Examen des Poésies Sacrées de le Franc de Pompignan; 1750, in 12mo.

1756. L'Ami des Hommes, ou Traité de la Population. Avignon, Paris; Hérissant; 6 parts, 3 vols. 4to, or 8 vols. 12mo, 1756. This work has been translated into Italian, under the title of L'Amico degli Uomini, ovverro Trattato della Popolazione, tradotto dal Francese (in Sienna), 1783; 3 vols. 12mo.

1757. Précis de l'Organization, ou Mémoire sur les Provinceaux, formant la 4 Partie de l'Ami des Hommes; 4to, 1758.

1759. Réponse du Correspondant à son Banquier, 1759, 8vo, that is to say, to a work by the learned and respectable Forbonnais upon finance.

1760. Théorie de l'Impôt; 1760, 4to, 12mo.

Marquis of Mirabeau was endowed with a mind of great power, rendered fruitful by the best education. He

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1760. Lettres sur les Corvées ; 1760, 4to.

1763. Philosophie rurale, ou Economie générale et politique de l'Agriculture, reduit à l'Ordre immuable des Lois physiques et morales, qui assurent la Prospérité des Empires. Amsterdam, (Paris), 1763, 4to, 1764, 12mo.

1764. Numerous articles in the "Journal de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Finances." This journal, which comprises thirty volumes, 12mo, was continued till 1774.

1767. Ephémérides du Citoyen, ou Chronique de l'Esprit national, et Bibliothèque Raisonnée des Sciences, &c. A great number of articles were furnished by the Marquis of Mirabeau to this Journal, which forms nearly 40 vols. 12mo, and was continued up to 1772.

1767. Elémens de la Philosophie Rurale. Lille, 1767, 12mo.

1768. Lettres sur le Commerce des Grains. Amsterdam et Paris ; Desaint, 1768, 12mo.

1768. Précis de l'Ordre Légal. Amsterdam (Paris), 1768, 12mo.

1769. Les Economiques. Paris, Lacombe, 1769, 2 vols. 4to., 4 vols. 12mo.

1770. Leçons Economiques. Amsterdam, 1770, 12mo.

1770. Les Devoirs. Milan, 1770, 8vo.

1774. Instruction Populaire, ou la Science, les Droits, et les Devoirs de l'Homme. Lausanne, Grasset, 1774, 12mo.

1775. Lettres sur la Législation, ou l'Ordre Légal, dépravé, rétabli, et perpétué ; Berne, 1775, 3 vols. 12mo. These letters thus collected had already been successively published in the "Ephémérides."

1776. Supplement à la Théorie de l'Impôt. The Hague. Fr. Gosse. 1776, 12mo.

1785. Entretien d'un jeune Prince avec son Gouverneur. Paris, Moutard, 1785, 4 vols. 12mo.

1788. Education Civile d'un Prince. Dourlac. Muller, 1788, 8vo.

had however become independent at too early an age. The superior advantages of youth, birth, and fortune, and even person, joined to an education but rarely acquired, and the most elevated faculties of the mind, to which we may add flattery, and the habit of domineering without resistance,—all this had brought into play his natural vanity, curbed for some time by his father, in whom some austere virtues, an entire feudal subserviency, and the exercise of a long military command, had exaggerated his sense of authority. The Marquis of Mirabeau accustomed himself early to place upon those under his control the heavy yoke of marital and paternal despotism;—the yoke of the husband, as he had seen it borne by his mother, whom he idolised; the paternal yoke, for never was son more submissive, and even at the age of fifty-four did this haughty man kneel every evening, and bow his head, to receive his mother's blessing. As a nobleman, affable; as a husband, imperious; popular and obliging among his tenantry; formal and haughty with his family; naturally gay, and yet almost always in his family circle wearing a covering of stern and gloomy

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1789. Hommes à célébrer pour avoir, en ces derniers Ages, mérité de leur Siècles et de l'Humanité, rélativement à l'Education Politique et Economique. Posthumous work of the Marquis of Mirabeau (edited by Father P. Boscowich). Bassano, 1789, 2 vols. 8vo.

1789. Rêve d'un Goutteux; a pamphlet relative to the labours of the next meeting of the National Assembly.

moroseness; possessing sensibility, and yet striving at all times to disguise the feelings of his heart; sincerely religious *, but without humility, without indulgence, and never forgiving; disdaining persuasion, and irritated by resistance; sincerely a philanthropist in speculative theory, but hard-hearted and inflexible in the practice of domestic discipline; an ardent apostle of legality, and governing his family with *lettres de Cachet;* economical, and even penurious, with regard to himself, and others; and adopting all possible order in dissipating his fortune in adventurous undertakings; wise, yet committing errors without number; clever, yet deceiving himself in all his measures;—he suffered much, and made others suffer likewise; he had little of serenity, less of joy, and he precipitated his nearest of kin into countless misfortunes, and what is worse, into faults which have been represented as crimes.

Let us dwell a little longer on this strange character, which it behoves us well to describe beforehand, for the purpose of enabling the reader to appreciate the strange events that follow. For, notwithstanding what

* It is erroneously that the piety of the Marquis of Mirabeau has been denied by several writers, particularly by Grimm, vol. ii. p. 171; Paris, Furne, 1829; vol. xvi. page 91; Paris, Fournier jeune, 1829. We affirm, from a thousand proofs, that there was as much sincerity as fervour in the religious opinions and feelings of the Marquis.

has been said by former writers, these will surprise, in a prodigious degree, even such readers as think themselves the best acquainted with the domestic sufferings of Mirabeau, and the obduracy of his father.

It has been said that the Marquis of Mirabeau hated his son; that foreseeing the future superiority of the latter, he was jealous of him, and wished therefore to strangle him. Let us add, that Mirabeau himself thought so, as is evident from the following words in an unpublished autograph letter now before us. "All my misfortunes derive their origin from having offended my father, to whom, ten years since, with the ingenuousness and imprudence of youth, I uttered these touching and too keenly felt words, which, to my misfortune, he will never forget: 'Alas! sir, if you had only self-love, would not my success still belong to you *?'"

We loudly deny these suppositions; and we feel assured that the reader of these volumes will believe us, inasmuch as our testimony must receive great authority from the incontestible truth of the hitherto unknown documents upon which we have founded our work.

The Marquis of Mirabeau experienced neither

* Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to Madlle. Danvers, dated, from the Donjon of Vincennes, Nov. 2nd 1780.

These words are repeated by Mirabeau, in a letter addressed on the 17th March 1778, to M. Lenoir. See original letters written from the Donjon of Vincennes. Vol. ii. p. 68.

hatred nor jealousy against his son: nevertheless, he has persecuted him from childhood to manhood with all the rancour of a mortal enemy.

Very few men were so enlightened and yet bore themselves with so haughty a spirit as the Marquis of Mirabeau. His son knew it, acknowledged it, declared it all his life, and placed himself, improperly, no doubt, above his father. Evidence of this fact is contained in the letter from which we have just extracted, and which, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes, is addressed to a very obscure young person, quite unknown to the family, entirely incapable of serving Mirabeau, and to whom he could speak only the language of conviction, and not of calculation.

" My father is as much my superior in genius as he is in age, and by being my parent *."

Mirabeau, as we were saying, has repeated a hundred times the same thing to all his confidants, who have stated it to us. He even wrote it after the death of the Marquis of Mirabeau. The latter, however, it will readily be believed, did not appreciate himself less. In all his life, of which his letters, and we possess thousands †, furnish us, as it were, with

* Letter already mentioned, addressed, Nov. 2nd, 1780, to Madlle. Danvers. Fac-similes of these sentences are among the number affixed to this work.

† We might make up more than thirty volumes, 8vo, from this correspondence, by reducing it simply to moral, historical, political,

a daily and complete detail, he is never found to confess a mistake; not only because he is self-opiniated, but, especially because, in other respects honourable, he could not conceive the possibility of being mistaken. It never happened that the advice of another, a demonstration, a result obtained, or any event whatever, could shake his confidence in himself. It never happened to him to discover in his own errors, prejudices, false measures, erroneous calculations, or in the precipitation or excess of passion, any thing whatever to explain the cause of his continual mis-reckonings; and when his mind, profoundly religious, did not attribute them to the will of providence, his infatuation in himself charged them to the folly or injustice of men, or the caprice of fate. The slightest hesitation, the least doubt of himself could never reach his mind; his impressions, his opinions, his convictions, his duties, such as he conceived them, his conscience, which he *exaggerates* and *displaces* *, have, in his eyes, an authority to which every thing must yield. He shows

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and literary generalities; and yet so interesting would it be, that such a publication could not fail to obtain great success, at a time when literature has found more attention and favour than it will ever acquire hereafter.

* These are characteristic terms which he himself employed in a moment of relaxation.

"I have almost always exaggerated and misplaced my conscience."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, Dec. 20th* 1782.

himself, let us say the word, under the rule of fanaticism, and the blindest of all fanaticism, the fanaticism of infallibility. He is a slave, and would be a Brutus*.

None, after a perusal of this work, even long before they have completed it, will doubt the correctness of this description of him. No one will attribute to unnatural hatred, a system of treatment which is explained by an incurable perverseness of mind. Nobody will henceforth suppose the Marquis to have been influenced by jealousy, which no man in the world could have inspired in one so conscious of his own superiority over every body else.

Gabriel Honoré, since so celebrated under the name of the Count of Mirabeau, was the fifth child of the Marquis, and was born the 9th of March 1749, at Bignon †. The period of gestation was alarming, and

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* Notwithstanding the sincere and profound respect which Mirabeau, even in his most fatal wanderings, preserved towards his father, it cannot be doubted that he had himself discovered this peculiar and marked feature in his parent's character, however doubtful its form. The passage we are about to transcribe will afford proof of this.

"What a man would they make of my father, if it is pretended that self-love or perseverance could dry up his entrails, and that he would rather sacrifice my life than acknowledge his error or my repentance."—(Page 54 des Observations sur un Libelle deffamatoire intitulé Mémoire à consulter et consultation pour la Comtesse de Mirabeau. Aix, J. David, 202 pages, small 4to.

† And not at the Castle of Mirabeau, as has been stated by several authors, especially M. Barthe, page 1 of the notice that precedes one of the last editions of the "Œuvres oratoires." Paris,

during the delivery, the unnatural size of the child's head placed the mother in extreme danger *. The Marquis often afterwards repeated, that before he was even acquainted with the sex of the child, the first words addressed to him were—"Do not be alarmed †!" Destined to be the most turbulent and the most active of youths, as well as the most eloquent of men, and the greatest orator of his day, Gabriel was born with one foot twisted and his tongue chained by the cord (frœnum) ‡, in addition to which his size and strength were extraordinary, and already were two teeth (molares) formed in his jaw §.

"You know now that I have a son who owes his existence to you ||. This has given me an opportunity

Kleffer, 1820. Publicola Chaussard has committed the same error in the summary claimed by Cadet Gassicourt, which precedes the collection entitled "Esprit de Mirabeau;" Paris, Buisson, Year V. (1797). There is a second edition, dated Year XII. (1804). Chaussard is mistaken also in supposing Mirabeau to have been born in 1750.

* Unpublished Letters from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, Le Franc de Pompignan, the Duke of Nivernois, Count Maurepas, dated March 11th, 13th, and 17th, 1749.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated March 11th, 1749.

‡ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, of the 18th Oct. 1767.

§ Original Letters, written from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. 111, page 3.

|| Allusion to a very strange fact between men of grave and enlightened minds, such as the Marquis of Mirabeau and the Duke

of knowing, that to do good, or at least to seem to do so, attracts a kindly regard. I am pretty charitable in word and deed, and I employ all the poor who offer themselves. My wife is so likewise; she dresses with constitutional heroism the most hideous ulcers, has various recipes, and gives five sous to each of those whose sores she has dressed. These trifles succeed: and being stopped by a sort of superstition, as there was a village festival on the birth of my first child *, I intended to have forbidden all village rejoicings. But the country people from the neighbouring parishes were assembled, and testified a joy which I did not expect from them, saying, that if he resembled his father, they should not, for a long time to come, eat acorns, as their neighbours of Egreville had done the year before †."

For a considerable period from the date of this letter we find but one sentence concerning the new-born infant.

"I have nothing to say about my enormous son,

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of Nivernois. The latter had seriously pointed out to the other a particular process by the aid of which a father might ensure the birth of a male child. The Marquis in his turn also hinted it very seriously in a letter dated July 4th 1766, to his son-in-law, the Marquis du Saillant, who afterwards had not less than eighteen daughters and but one son.

* The first child was Victor Charles Francis, born March 16th 1744, and died in infancy.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated April 25th 1749.

only that he beats his nurse, who does not fail to return it, and they try which shall strike the hardest. They are good heads together *."

Gabriel, when three years old, had the confluent small-pox, of a very malignant type. He was for several days in danger. His mother had more tenderness than prudence, and in impatient solicitude blamed the timid management of the physician. She had a great number of recipes, as we have before stated, and she thought proper to try upon the tumified

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, February 10th 1750. In a letter dated July 24th 1763, from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, we find some rather interesting particulars relative to the nurse:

" The hale and robust farrier's wife, of whom you speak, is the same that nursed my son. She is a mistress woman, who has well brought up two coveys of children. She kept a forge, though a widow; for having had two husbands, and finding that they did not last, she refused to take a third. She has paid her husbands' debts, and brought up her sons, who have married in obedience to her wishes. She has reared flocks of geese that would do the Prussian exercise, and turkeys capable of passing a decree upon inoculation †, all the while striking upon the anvil as a pastime, under the impression, as she says, that it lengthens the arms. This is much better than winnowing oats, as Dulcinea did at the audience she gave the ambassador Sancho."

† Just and pointed allusion to the decree rendered six weeks before, June 8th 1763, and by which the Parliament of Paris ordered that the faculties of THEOLOGY and Medicine of that city should report their opinion upon the practice of inoculation for small-pox, and the advantages or disadvantages which might result therefrom.

face some hazardous fomentations, and the application of an eye-salve, which was the cause that the boy's face remained deeply furrowed and scarred *. The Marquis wrote some time after to the Bailli—

" Your nephew is as ugly as the nephew of Satan †."

Let us here remark, that the Marquis returns so often to the subject of this ugliness, more apparent at an age when the expression of the countenance does not compensate for the deformity of the features, that we should be tempted to suspect in him a sort of involuntary aversion, which sometimes takes wise and tender parents by surprise, and is not always overcome by the suggestions of reason, justice, and nature. If such prejudice was really conceived by the Marquis of Mirabeau, it might have been, if not excused, at least explained by this peculiar circumstance, that all his other children and their children were, without exception, gifted with very remarkable beauty, as were likewise himself, his brother, their father and mother, and also their ancestors, whose portraits we possess.

Be this as it may, the accident which disfigured Gabriel, served as a lesson to the father. He had all his other children inoculated, as appears from the following sentence in a letter which he wrote ten years

* Unpublished domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 9th 1754.

after, in reference to the son of one of his friends, the President Rougeaut, who was carried off by the small-pox.

"When, after the loss of my first-born, I had my children inoculated, I who firmly believed that I did not, among my paternal rights, possess such power;—when my mother, my worthy mother, pious for nearly sixteen lustres, positive, immoveable, an enemy to all innovation, and never having yielded, during that period, but under the rod of resignation, has given her consent, and pressed the execution of it, why does he neglect the pressing duty of securing his own safety by inoculation *?"

The extraordinary faculties of Gabriel were displayed in the quickness of his understanding, and the retentiveness of his memory. Both were carefully cultivated by a man of merit, Poisson, of whom the Marquis speaks in these terms—

"Poisson is the soul and spring of all that I am worth, or that my family can be worth in future. He is a superior man, who loves me like a spaniel, and whom therefore I love as I ought †."

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated August 25th 1762.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 27th 1757. This very honourable and distinguished man was long employed in the settlement of the Marquis of Mirabeau's affairs, particularly in exploring the

He bestowed the greatest care upon his pupil, who rewarded his attentions more by his understanding than by his application. However, from his fourth year, Gabriel was at least curious, inquisitive, and fond of reading. He possessed himself of all papers that came in his way, and it would be difficult to state how far his curiosity led him in search of them *.

This child, at that time the only male descendant of a family greatly infatuated with its name, occupied a great deal of the attention of the Bailli, then only Chevalier Mirabeau, resident at Guadaloup, of which he was governor. He contsantly mentioned the boy in his letters, in a tone half serious, half jesting. He used to complain of his brother's silence.

" You say nothing of your son," he wrote. " For whom then would you have me interest myself, I who have not, nor can have, nor will have children ? Would you attempt, by your silence concerning my nephew, to reduce me to the necessity of presenting you with one ?

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mines of Glanges in Limousin. More than thirty years after, Mirabeau with great zeal seized an opportunity of being useful to his instructor, by procuring him the appointment of Director of the Hospital at Bayeux. (Unpublished letters from Mirabeau to Vitry. Paris, 1806. Lenormand, page 11.) Our readers are, perhaps, aware, that the son of this same Poisson has acquired in our days under the name of De la Chabeaussiere, an annuity renown in the literature of Athenæa and Almanacks.

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated April 2d 1754.

Indeed I should not be far wrong; for my health, which is not good, would be better, were I less virtuous. It is a strange circumstance, but I am attacked in the same manner that Louis the younger used formerly to be. I hope it will not be a troublesome affair, as here in the Tropics we do not possess the ice-ponds of Saint Bernard. However, I shall become the first martyr to chastity of my family, of my profession, perhaps even of my order. This primitiveness will not, nevertheless, please me much. God has not given me so fine a voice as to tempt me to resemble Narses, if it be necessary that I should perform upon the seas the exploits which he accomplished upon land. Bagoas, Origen, and he, were three great men whom I have no ambition to imitate *."

Notwithstanding the importunities of the Bailli, the answers he obtained did not always satisfy his curiosity; and during a year in which there are more than three hundred pages of correspondence, we find but this one passage:

"Your nephew is fat and strong; he is not forgotten, and his education is excellent, for that is the only thing to prevent the smoke of the heart from being drifted in a wrong direction. All Paris talks of his precocity; nevertheless, as he is your child as well as mine, I

* Unpublished letter from the Chevalier Mirabeau to the Marquis, dated January 20th 1754.

must tell you that his acquirements are not very extensive at present. He has little vice, except mechanical inequality, if it were permitted to break forth. He has not much sensitiveness, and is as porous as a bed of sand; but he is only five years old *." A few days after, the Marquis again talks of his son.

"The Marmot has all at once become quite mischievous, quite inquisitive, and quite troublesome. He gives us occupation, but we carefully watch him, and he is in excellent hands †."

We pass over some rather puerile details, and shall extract only a single sentence to prove that happy prognostics were formed from the solicitude lavished upon the child.

"Thank M. Poisson very much, for the education which he bestows upon our Marmot; may he make him an honest man, and a courageous citizen. This is all that is necessary. With these qualities he will make that race of pigmies tremble before him, who play the great men at court. I repeat, with sincerity, the prayer which Joad made on behalf of Eliacin—May God hear my prayer ‡!"

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* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirbeau to the Chevalier, dated May 13th 1754.

† Unpublished letter from the same to the same, dated May 24th 1754.

‡ Unpublished letter from Chevalier to the Marquis, dated August 11th 1754.

Gabriel was, like all children, an indefatigable scribbler; but the following effort surpasses common example:

"I have mentioned a copy of our little boy. This is it:—Poisson, for the first time, the other day, desired him to write before us whatever came into his head, and, with a view of giving himself a lesson, he wrote what I here transcribe for you, which I shall have framed, in order that he may remember that before the age of five years, he knew nothing but what was good. This is the specimen, literally.

"'Sir, I beg you will pay attention to your writing, and not make a blot upon it. Be attentive to what is done, obey your father, your master, your mother, and vex no one. No subterfuge; honour above all things. Attack no one, unless you are attacked. Defend your country. Behave not ill to the servants, and be not familiar with them. Conceal the faults of your neighbour, because the same faults may occur to yourself*."

On the 23d September, 1756, Mirabeau, then seven years old, was confirmed at Bignon by a cardinal †.

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 9th 1754.

† Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 26th 1756. The cardinal's name is not given in the letter. We supposed that it might have been Cardinal Choiseul. (Anthony Clériadus of Choiseul-Beaupré), a friend of the family; but that prelate, then Archbishop of Besançon,

It was at the grand supper which succeeded this ceremony, that he made the singular distinction related by himself.

"They explained to me that God could not make contradictions; for instance, a stick that had but one end. I enquired whether a miracle was not a stick which had but one end. My grandmother never forgave me *."

If we may judge by the following extract from the correspondence of the two brothers, other sallies may have wounded the sensitiveness of the austere and venerable grandmother, whose mind, otherwise religious, yielded at times to innocent pleasantry. It appears that, from forgetfulness, crawfish were not served at supper, although that crustaceous creature abounded in the watery soil of Bignon. On this subject the Marquis wrote to his brother—

"I find that the crawfish were wanting at the reception of His Eminence. The resemblance of the covering ought to have encouraged their appearance. There is not, in a certain sense, any difference between the two things, only that the antecedent of the one is the consequence of the other. This smart jest, and to the taste of Martin Luther, will appear to you of doubtful

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did not receive his hat until 1761. Bernis, another friend, much more intimate, was not promoted for several years after.

* Same letter.—Original letters, written from the Donjon of Vincennes, Vol. III, page 130.

expression, because you have not a turn for trite sayings. In order to aid you, this is what I wished to say: that the one comes out of the cauldron and the other seeks to enter it *."

Mirabeau's childhood was difficult of control. Occasions for reward from his father and tutor, both not very indulgent, were rare, and chastisement was almost continual.

" The Count does not travel out of his course of penance; in truth, he has plenty of it, and deservedly so. I am an additional instrument for Poisson, because, when he has promised remission, I enable him to break the promise without breaking his word; and I am strict †.

" To-day a sort of festival is given to my mother (the Dowager Marchioness and widow of John Anthony, then seventy-two years of age). This is the business of my son's tutor, an inestimable author and actor in such follies. You will see a part performed by a little monster called my son, who, were he the offspring of the ancient La Thorillière, would not be a more naturally bedevilled, memorable, and buffoon comedian? In fine, Madam, nobody of your rank will be there, except the mother of the young savage who has found favour in your eyes. That which worldly people would term favour, your

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 3d 1756.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 10th 1756.

heart would make appear as addressed by the rising generation to one who has passed seventy-two times three hundred and sixty-five days in the practice of every species of virtue. Allow yourself to be tempted, Madam—it will be a hidden sin. '*Nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice Teucro.*' The Duke of Nivernois will explain this Latin to you *."

Mirabeau's education became more and more troublesome. Poisson being extremely ill, the Marquis was forced, not without regret, to leave Paris, where he was elaborating his treatises and presiding at his committees of economists; and where, in addition, he warmly served his brother, the Bailli, with the Marquis of Belle-Isle and the Abbé, shortly afterwards Cardinal de Begnis. He could not dispense with going to Bignon, in order to pay attention to his private affairs, now necessarily neglected by the invalid, who, to the office of tutor to his patron's sons, added that of land steward. A number of letters attest the anxiety and discouragement which this long and really dangerous illness, and the slow return of the patient to convalescence, produced in the Marquis, who, nevertheless, does not fail to complain of his unruly child, and concludes one of his letters thus:—

"Poisson will die (he recovered), and I shall go

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated June 17th 1757.

forward, dragging my son about my waist, without knowing into which river I shall plunge him *."

"My son, whose body grows, whose talkativeness increases, and whose countenance becomes wonderfully ugly, is also as ugly in his inquiries and predilections, and a troublesome talker to boot. His mother was yesterday making some anti-declaration to him with regard to his future wife; he replied, that he hoped she would not form her estimate of him by his face. His mother said ingenuously—'Where, also, should I look?' He retorted 'What is below will aid the upper part;' and we all laughed most heartily, without calculating that there is sufficient to excite reflection in this sally of a babe †."

Mirabeau, at ten years of age, experienced a long and dangerous illness.

"My eldest son is still labouring under the consequences of his fever, which has kept hold of him for these two months past, at different intervals. The most grievous symptom is, that he is as rational as if he were thirty years old, and that Poisson is highly satisfied—a thing most uncommon and suspicious ‡."

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 5th 1757.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 21st 1758.

‡ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 23d 1759.

"My embarrassments have recommenced: my son has had a fresh attack of fever, accompanied with malignant symptoms. It would have been necessary to beget another, and where the devil should I find such another sprig of mischief* ?"

We read elsewhere—

"This child, though turbulent, is mild and easily controlled, but of a temper tending to indolence. As he does not ill resemble Punch, being all belly and posterior, he appears to me very well qualified for the manœuvres of the tortoise: he presents his shell, and allows you to strike†."

"This great glutton, Gabriel, goes everywhere begging alms for the poor, following in that respect the example of my mother, in spite of everything I can say to them to prove that there is nothing more out of place, and more positively in opposition to my principles, than manual charities, which make people poor instead of relieving them; which excite and unshame misery; which are consumed without reproducing; finally, which turn aside money from fruitful employment, and where it would triple itself, in order to throw it into the mud‡."

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated September 21st 1758.

† Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Le Franc of Pompignan, dated October 6th 1759.

‡ Letter from the same to the same, dated November 5th 1759.

We here give a reply made by Gabriel to his mother, who reproached him with talking too much, and seeking to be thought clever.

" Mamma!" said he; " I think the mind is like the hand; be it handsome or ugly, it is made for use, and not for show *."

We find an anecdote, at a somewhat later period, which does honour to Mirabeau's character, and he was then scarcely eleven years old.

" The other day, at the prizes which, on my estate, I bestow upon the best runner, he gained a hat; and turning towards an old man who wore a cap, and putting upon the old man's head his own hat, which was still very good,

" ' Here,' said he, ' take this; I have not two heads.' This youth appeared to me then to be Emperor of the world. Something divine immediately beamed from his countenance, and attitude. I raved about it, I shed tears, and the lesson was not lost upon me †."

It would be easy for us to give a detailed and daily account of Mirabeau's childhood and education. Our only difficulty would be in making selections from the voluminous correspondence in our possession, especially from the letters which passed several times a week

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 6th 1760.

† Unpublished letter from the Duke of Nivernois to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated from St. Maur, September 11th 1760.

between the Marquis and his brother, and between the former and Le Franc of Pompignan, who was bound to him by the closest ties of friendship, and, if the term may be allowed, by a conformity of dogmatical and pedantic habits. But such details, which would be wanting both in interest and in usefulness, would take us far beyond the limits of our plan, or rather it would occupy the place of numerous other facts more worthy of the reader's attention. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a few remarks upon the fantastic inconsistencies into which the Marquis was thrown by a continual struggle between his reason and his prejudices, between his character and his heart, between opinion conceived and opinion inculcated; and we shall find him refusing to a child the indulgence usually granted to a young man, judging in haste, and chastising when he should have given instruction.

Here, in the first place, is Gabriel, who "with great talent and intellect, but with still greater natural defects, has not, perhaps, at bottom, either the complete vices that people attribute to him, or the virtues which I would fain substitute *."

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1761. The expression "that people attribute to him" is very remarkable. At that period Mirabeau was only twelve years of age. It is certainly as extraordinary at that age to have enemies as to be already infected with "vices" and with "complete vices." But these vices were not so real as the aversion

Soon after, we find: "This child promises to become a very fine subject*." Then, "He is only just born, and the extravasation is already developed. He has a spirit of contradiction, fantastic, fiery, unaccommodating, and inclining to evil before he is acquainted with it or is capable of its commission †."

Here we have "an elevated mind under the frock of a babe. This shows a strange instinct of pride, noble, nevertheless; it is an embryo of a bloated bully who will eat every man alive before he is twelve years old ‡."

There we read, "He is a type deeply stamped in meanness, and absolute baseness, and of that rough and dirty quality of the caterpillar, which cannot be rubbed off §." Again: "He possesses intelligence, a memory, and a capacity which strikes, amazes, and terrifies §."

Again: "He is a nothing set off with trifles, which will excite the admiration of silly gossips, but will

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prematurely excited by this ill-fated boy. We shall soon produce evidence on this head. *Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 5th* 1761.

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Le Franc of Pompignan, dated November 15th 1761.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 29th 1761.

‡ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 3d 1761.

§ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 16th 1762.

never be but the fourth-part of a man, if, perchance, he becomes any thing *."

Elsewhere, the Marquis writes, "I see that the continuation of your kindness towards your nephew has reference to the talents and capacity in which you know he is not deficient; but I know, by virtue of the physical cut of such characters, that you must give it up, whether you will or not. They are always known by their brutal appetites, which emanate from themselves. Indulgence in such appetites leads to excess, which is gross intemperance; and, as self-love, which abandons no one, even upon the wheel, becomes cowardly with cowards, vain with the vain, ferocious with the ferocious, their ambition is to surpass swine. There are dregs in every race †."

Let us remark here one strange peculiarity. If the Marquis is judged by the bitter, we may even say atrocious, style of the last paragraph, the harshness of which we have accused him in our sketch of his character will be readily admitted. But it may be inquired, what authority we have for our assertions, made at the same time, concerning his gaiety of temper, sensibility of heart, and the paternal affection, which he lavished upon a part of his family, even upon strangers, while

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated February 10th 1762.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 18th 1762.

he refused it to several of his nearest of kin. This question will be answered by the extracts which we have selected almost by chance, during a period nearly contemporaneous and very limited, from the correspondence we possess. We have here exercised no other care than as regards our own space. We might extend our extracts indefinitely; but the interest which these materials raise in ourselves, remind us that we ought not to make an indiscreet use of them. Whatever judgment may be formed of them, it will be admitted, we trust, that, independently of the advantage of enlivening and varying our narrative, these extracts were necessary to the particular object stated in this digression, and to justify what we have said concerning the prodigious difference between the *familiar* and the *official* style of the Marquis of Mirabeau; a difference with which those who have read any of his numerous and stilted works will necessarily be much struck.

"You ask me, Madam, whether I am well in my solitude. Judge for yourself. We compose, in all, a little ark of thirty-eight individuals, without mentioning four children at school, one of whom alone * is sixteen ells high—for so much do they demand to make a dress for my daughter. Instead of buying such things, I have interest, to a great amount, to pay for estates

* Mary Anne Jane, born 10th July 1745. She became a nun in the convent of the ladies of St. Dominique at Montargues.

which I took upon myself to purchase, before I had asked the king when it would please him to grant us the property, and take the usufruct. It has at last so pleased him, and he has not inquired of me whether I approve of the property and the price. In addition to this, my shoe pinches in certain places which I do not mention. I have also certain wens behind my ears, always with deference to the criticism of a punctilious geographer, who might place them elsewhere. Well!—with all this I live from day to day as I can; and, when I have no other subject, I laugh again at the grimace which I made a quarter of an hour before in a fit of despair, being always, nevertheless, more and more persuaded of the truth of my great moral principle, that, in order to work ourselves up to a proper state of happiness here, we must incessantly cultivate our sensibility, and root out self-love.

"With my elegances and urbanities, at which you are in the habit of laughing, I have always brown bread, sometimes soft, sometimes hard,—wine a little muddy, some cow-beef in the pot, an entrée of necks and claws of geese, a salad of water cress for the roast, some boiled cauliflowers for entremêts; a few wrinkled grapes, green and rotten, and some rancid nuts for dessert, and always contradiction at table, which teaches me to swallow Provençal impatience. I further possess a little green fire-wood, a candle that serves to write by, and waves most complaisantly to my window curtain,

which makes the sign, and sets the example. With all this, I have a temper ever ready to overflow; a heart (you know that my *tendo Achillis* is in the heart) a heart, I say, which feels grief, hastens it, divines it, anticipates it; senses, (God be praised!) open to temptation; an intellect in which no one will believe, for my words possess but their primitive virtue bestowed by Providence—'bray with modulation *."

" Really, Madam, I pity those who feel compassion at my residence in the country†; that is to say, let us distinguish, if you please, among those who pity me. Are they my friends, and is it on account of my separation from them? In that case, they are right; and this becomes serious, for their presence and their conversation are my only safeguards against a state of frenzied activity, ardour, and impatience, which has devoured me during my whole life. And if God had not given me the heart I possess, I should either end in the madhouse, or make too much noise in the world. Thus, they who would fain console me for my present privations would be ill received; and they who would offer nightingales, cockchafers, and tulips, as a compensation for the loss of my friends, might as well propose, to a

* Unpublished letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 13th 1759.

† Our readers will recollect that the Marquis of Mirabeau, after his temporary detention at the donjon of Vincennes, remained in exile, six weeks, on his estate at Bignon.

starving man, a nosegay or a perfuming pan, instead of a good dinner, or a pair of satin stays to one of the king of Prussia's grenadiers. I therefore, tell you Madam, that being bound only to and by my friends, and having had the happiness and the good sense to attach myself to those I have found most deserving, and to merit their friendship, instead of gaining them in *ternes* *, in *ambes* †, or in *extraits* ‡, such an attempt to reconcile me to my misfortune would be too bad, and enough to ruin a poor man who has sacrificed every thing to this kind of lottery.

" As for those who pity me without being my friends, without much caring for me, and only for the purpose of annoying our lords of the ministry and of finance nobly leagued against me, a poor and ill-advised link boy,—tell them, Madam, that my place of exile is painted to them, or that they themselves have painted it, in hideous colours, in order to excite your compassion. But, for the sake of truth, I ought to tell you that it is very pretty. In truth, the waters and the fields have not the appearance of the month of May. The birds are silent, the swallows are not near their arrival, and the wild geese fly so high that they would be unable to distinguish between a courtier and an honest man. Nevertheless, when calmness reigns, imagination gives to the fields more than the reality takes from

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* A lottery term in France. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

them. The walks are dry, and all the roads from hamlet to hamlet are formed of the green sward. You double your pace without labour, and the fire welcomes your return, having a fagot at bottom, some stumps in front, and some chips for a pediment; it dissipates the damp, and, saving respect, is worth more than the sun. But, say they, society? Have I not my capuchin *, to whom I demonstrated yesterday, that the fleas, of which he maintains a nursery, are very detrimental to agriculture, inasmuch as the time spent in scratching oneself is so much lost to the cause of labour; that beards are even more so, since the dews from heaven and the fat of the land stick to them, and are thus turned from their proper destination; that our empty pockets, from which the clergy are agog to draw coin, are, compared with well lined fobs of the sixty farmers general, as lean cows to the fat ones mentioned in Scripture. What more shall I add?—for I say so many things that in the end I shall be burned alive. Have I not the company of the good people, the farmers and vassals of a foolish but good lord, who at times is their dupe, even voluntarily †? But they love me; for when

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* Father Etienne, confessor to the Dowager Marchioness.

† We find in the Domestic Memoirs of the Marquis of Mirabeau, the recital of a fact, pointed enough, which explains, among others, the term "voluntary dupe."

"In 1740 and 1741 the price of corn reached four livres the bushel, and, at times, five livres. My farmers, who owe their rent

a man has sown good works the harvest comes early or late. On every occasion, and on every pretence, these people remind me that their fate is confided to my care, and they make me happy, by being so through me. For it is the performance of our duty, it is good works that constitute life; the rest is mere vegetation. These good people, who overwhelm me with grapes, and apples, and pears, and nuts, have a correct judgment, an attitude of their own, and an amicable mode of accost-

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in grain, did not pay, liking better to be in arrears with me, and sell their prodnce. My rent collectors, such as I describe them, seldom pressed the farmers, and this created great arrears, which, valued upon the footing of market tariffs, would have amounted to a considerable sum. The priest came to see me at Paris the following year, and performed his calling by talking to me of my poor tenants, telling me that in the country they were made to pay corn for corn. I did not hesitate to tell his reverence that I would do as others did.

"'Sir,' said he, 'you will, then, allow me to console them with this promise, and to assure them that you will receive in payment, corn for corn?'

"I consented. In the afternoon, my friends laughed at me well. But my word was given; I kept it, and they made up their arrears, with corn at nine sous a bushel *. O ye who read this! understand well that to be an honest man it is not necessary to be so simple as I was, and still am, in most things. On the contrary, to be a very honest man, you must be well informed; but it is better to be too stupid than too cunning in that sense, and your word should never be broken. Besides, keep clear of such details, since you have agents. But when you give judgment, let it be on the side of mercy, and to confer benefits."

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* As we have already stated, these memoirs were addressed by the author to his children, long before their birth.

ing me, which makes me satisfied with myself, and which I have rarely been able to obtain from people in good society. The black hats of the district are a little more embarrassing; but, after having raised them in their own estimation, by putting them at their ease and caressing them, I give them a lesson, by shaking hands with the first peasant of my acquaintance that I meet, and kissing the foreheads of his children. All this amuses me, because it is just, and brings sons and brothers closer together. Besides, I have still good company, although female: this is the little mare which you gave me, and which, save your respect, resembles you; for the dear little beast is gentle, very even tempered, sober, unpretending, and free from bad counsel,—rather timid, it is true—but facility in taking fright becomes the fair sex so well! *"

"Do you see me escorting at night a troop of ladies —not always to the bowers of effeminacy, but training them up to walk upon flints, climb over hedges, leap ditches, and enter thickets—and returning with them at night scathless and laughing, to the great detriment of my bread and lettuces? All is action and motion around us, except that the distinctive feature of my little habitation is, that each is as much master of it as I am myself. * * * * * *

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort.

"You ask me what your friend is doing*. This morning, as I was about to mount my horse, I saw her door open, and I entered. It was seven o'clock. She slept so calmly, and her eye-brows were so cloudless that her sleep resembled the repose of a good conscience. My real father of the Church, the good natured La Fontaine, says, upon an occasion pretty nearly similar, 'Let the same be given to me; I shall know what to do with it.' For my own part I did nothing, but drew back softly, and it was only the better to mount my horse. To teach them to sleep another time, I set out for a long ride. On my return, by accident I placed my nose against the window. It is right you should know that my lawn is a field, and that field, newly mowed, was covered with haymakers, among whom I saw two white birds with black heads, each with a pitchfork in its hand, turning up my hay in a desperate manner. Of these birds, the one was from Switzerland†, the other from Germany‡. They returned to the house in perspiration, with the pitchforks in their hands, to demand payment, one with only an illumined tint, the other quite red. In the afternoon it became cool: a chair was brought for my

* Madame de Pailly.

† The same Madame de Pailly.

‡ Julianna Dorothee Sylvia, born Countess of Kunsberg, then for two years past, the widow of Count Alexander Louis of Mirabeau. She continued to reside with the Marquis of Mirabeau, and died on the 14th of November 1772.

mother, and placed by the side of the little river. All her female court were around, amusing themselves with preventing the ducks from passing. Higher up, servants in jackets were fishing for crawfish, and a German footman was disputing in his vernacular tongue with a huge crawfish, which should relinquish his finger to the other. I do assure you it was not without pain that the German carried the point. But note this well,

For the moral is worth an apologue.

" I requested that the mowers might be told to approach and mow before us. One of them was disputing with his comrade upon the gift of misery. His name is Pilon; he is a prime fellow, and labours with good will.

" ' I work all day, the whole year round, without intermission,' said he. ' I never want work; I deny myself everything, and yet I can never make both ends meet. My goods are worth more than yours; you are not so strong as I am, and yet you prosper.'

" ' Faith!' replied the other, whose name is Audouin, ' I was a long time ill. It comes of itself.'

" And this was true:—do you know why? The fact is, that Audouin has a good wife and Pilon a slut. My mother soon returned to the house, and shortly after I disposed of the walking company. I conducted them by some rather troublesome paths, and then pushed them into a copse of five years' growth.

"'Oh! my new head dress!—Oh! my mourning ruffles for Catherine Opalinski!'

"To obviate the inconvenience of seeing so many fine things perish, they placed the tails of their gowns over their heads.

"'I have read in Rabelais,' said I to them, 'that Pantagruel arrived in a country where the rump sat down first. Try to turn it to another use.'

"On receiving this hint they immediately borrowed from the crawfish above mentioned their mode of advancing, and got out of the scrape pretty well. Such are the benefits of reading and travelling*!"

"You wish to have some news.—I will tell you that twice one no longer makes two, or, at least, I have reason to think so: for in this house one and one make half a dozen devils who quarrel the whole day with high words, and get reconciled in whispers, at my expense. As I am fond of order, I am always committed by such people. I war with them only when they insist upon detaining my messenger, as they do each time they have a letter to write in the space of three days, which the courier gives them. Instead of correcting themselves, they have resolved to drag me into the vice of idleness; and they come to my chamber to induce me to commit a mortal sin. You know that literary people are rather weak under temptation, and I swear

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated July 7th 1763.

to you that St. Anthony was never hugged in such a manner. They came to my room; I frowned at the top of my face and laughed at the bottom. One took a chair, and another a stool, and there they sat.

"'Brother, will you be so good as to finish this fine narrative?'

"I took up a stick: but when I had turned one of them out, the other came in, and they assumed such laughing faces as I think Madam Potiphar never wore when she found herself rejected by the late Mr. Joseph, who refused also to tell her a story. When at last I evacuated the fortress, left them in possession, and they were quite sure that I should not return, they assembled the whole house, and put every thing in confusion. My fine tapestry of the castle where I used to see Æneas and Alexander so civilised that at every opening of the door they used to balance and incline by way of salutation, was now so grievously nailed that hereafter the two heroes will not be able to move from their places. Æneas, who was surprised in the cavern in the embraces of Dido, will be obliged to embrace her to eternity—a punishment till now unknown, and which he well deserves to the utmost rigour, though it is not the way to warm the frozen Trojan. Lately, I made a short journey to Montargis, and to my two days I added Sunday, being well pleased to escape a high mass. The ladies had only the Saturday to turn every thing at home upside down;

and in that one day they carried away all my presses, and all the shelves with which my room was surrounded, but which, according to their taste, were not finished in an artist-like manner. They thrust my books into a corner, nailed upon uniform shelves I know not how many rags and ribands, and overwhelmed me with gildings, looking-glasses, and other graceful things. In fine, they persecuted me with elegances, and knew not what to think of to torment me. God, nevertheless, has just punished one, who is caught, and I hope the other will soon follow; for, at a time of life when I could suffice for a whole collection of such clacking clocks, I remarked, that whenever one was out of order another was not far from being in the same state *."

To draw nearer the particular subject of our work, to whom we shall shortly return, we terminate these extracts with a few words which the Marquis writes in reference to his eldest daughter, and by the recital of a trifling incident, in which we find Mirabeau, then fourteen years old, whom we shall not afterwards quit.

"My eldest daughter is beautiful, and so tall that I should have made you laugh by my attitude, when by way of favour, they made me lead her out of the parlour. I did not know whether it was proper that

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated June 28th 1764.

I should hand her out. I was completely astonished to find a great girl caressing me. I allowed myself to be led; I kissed her hand; in a word, I had the appearance of a poor fool, quite glad and happy*. This great girl, in her manners and awkwardness, has some good points, a good heart, a noble mind, a lively temper, and especially something superabundant in her composition and her nature. In a word, she is a magnificent exaggeration †. This colossal nun is a phenomenon: I know nothing more majestic than her stature; her face resembles mine, without much difference in the proportions, except that her eyes, though equally large, are less open, but brighter, and more tender. Now, of what use is all this?—what can be made of her in a sepulchre? This white veil makes me ill when I see it ‡!"

"A thought invariably struck me each night the instant I put my hand upon the first button of my coat to undress myself; it said to me:

"'There is your discharge from one of the days allotted you: what use have you made of it?'

"Here, madam, is an account of my doings of yesterday.

"For some time past my son and his sister were in

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 24th 1757.

† Letter from the same to the same, dated July 30th 1763.

‡ Letter from the same to the same, dated August 2nd 1763.

a prodigious hubbub of business and motion. He, talkative, hasty, impetuous, and merry, as you know him to be, and moreover intoxicated with the solemn opportunity of creating a bustle, making a display, and roaring sufficiently to crack earth and sky. She*, a tall girl, pretty enough, but with hands like a carpenter's tool,—gentle, good, gay, the heartiest laugher in France, witty, though she appears simple and childish, possessing a retentive memory, awkward in her attitudes, wanting decision, complying, meditative when she is not laughing, for traces are beginning to be visible in her eyes and in her manners of that mild melancholy which shows that the vine is in blossom; in short, she has the behaviour of the convent in all its pomp, for she places her gloves behind her back. She is, moreover, well informed, understands Latin, draws prettily and accompanies on the harpsichord a very pretty voice.

" Now, you must know that yesterday, our gardener, who is a good lad, though he understands nothing about trees, married Mary, the daughter of my son's famous female farrier. Out of this arose preparations without number, and a tumult and bustle between the brother, who wished to do honour to his nurse, whom he much loves, and the sister, occupied day and night in capari-

* Caroline Elizabeth, born September 5th 1747, married October 18th 1763, to Gaspard Charles of Lasteyrie, Count, and since Marquis, du Saillant.

soning the great fat bride, upon whose little finger she could ride any day. Suffice it to say, that my son gave away the bride, a high mass was granted to them, at which all the household attended, with the exception of my heretics* and myself, although my mother, be it said, had warned me that it was always a good thing to go to mass. I shall pass over the nuptials and the bridal feast in silence: the public papers will instruct you sufficiently. In the afternoon the whole posse came to the castle, with Nabonne, the village fiddler, at their head. This worthy orchestra in himself had played at mass, during the time of the elevation, the air of 'les folies d'Espagne' in a manner that edified everybody. These worthy people are pretty well at their ease at my house: the party at piquet had only to move to another room where the worthy folk were dancing, and the children, those faces with eyes so bright and countenances so ingenuous, that they always affect me, were addressing me with 'Good day, my Lord!' one seizing my cane, another pulling a button, &c. As some great personages† rouged themselves to hide from the vulgar eye that their haughty soul was displeased with its case, so the Lord of Bignon, although it was then rather sultry, was desirous of making one of the joyous

* The widow of Alexander Louis, and Dupont de Nemours, who, at the age of twenty-four, at that time, was on a visit to the Marquis. Both of them were protestants.

† Augustus, Mazarin, &c.

throng. He led out the bride to dance, and thought to come off with a minuet; but the female farrier, her mother, had forgotten to include such an ingredient in her daughter's education. It was, therefore, necessary to proceed at once to a country dance, for I do nothing as a matter of course. Ah, Countess! do you know what occurred to me? A moral thought, but wholly moral: in touching Mary's arm, firm, fat, and muscular, an arm fit for a hammer—to say all, that fine portion of thought which a certain author * states to travel immediately to the end without caring for the middle, gave the lie to his definition. I reflected then on the coming task of my gardener, and, placing myself entirely in his situation, as I did lately in that of king and ministers, faith! I was frightened. I swear to you that it was the first time in my life that a similar circumstance happened to me with a person of her sex; and as I thought that the imagination was always young, I could have sworn that even at the age of ninety a similar fright would never have come upon me to humble me.

"'Ah! what are we?' I exclaimed, on quitting the dance. I mentioned my mishap to those heretics, who, no doubt, have made mischief; and I retired to digest my shortness of breath, and to promise that another time I would go to high mass †."

* Montaigne.

† Letter already quoted from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated July 24th 1763.

Obliged to terminate this digression, for which we shall not perhaps be reproached, in order again to enter upon our task, which is becoming laborious, we will admit that, starting from the present period, our correspondence presents no longer the father in any other character than one of always increasing severity, excited by the excusable levity and thoughtlessness of youth,—by the imprudent impetuosity of the mother,—by the artificial manœuvres of Madam de Pailly,—by the deep aversion of an old servant named Grévin, who, nobody knows how, exercised an extraordinary influence over the Marquis of Mirabeau.

"The eldest boy might well be called a still-born child. He appears to me, at least up to this time, intended for nothing but a fool; almost an ungovernable maniac, and possessing all the vile qualities of the maternal stock. As he is now to have a number of select masters, and as, from his confessor down to his comrade, all are in correspondence with me, I shall be able to see the nature of the beast, and I do not think any thing good will ever be made of him *."

The child was soon taken from Poisson, "who had failed with him, and was beyond him; for we cannot slacken the bridle to him any more than we can curb

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated 19th of April 1763.

him *. I must take him under my own care; for he fears me, and only me. But I cannot tie myself to this inexplicable and incurable perversion of intellect: I have other duties to fulfil, in order to justify the reputation, quite undeserved, which Providence has given me, by paying me in the coin of honest men's esteem, which is well worth any other kind of payment †. The eldest has hitherto justified all that he promised; this is saying everything. He is going to the academy at Angers, which is renowned, in order to remove him from the filth of Paris ‡.

This resolution was soon abandoned.

"In my perplexity I have taken a middle course, and persuaded honest Sigrais §, with whose opinions and manners you are acquainted, to assist me. I adopted the true mode of inducing him to accept my offer, not only by concealing nothing from him, but by exaggerating the truth. To be brief, he has undertaken it for the whole time necessary to decide the thing, and to make a passage between the paternal mansion and the freedom of the lessons ||. He will

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated January 15th 1764,

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, and to the Countess of Rochefort, dated October 20th and 23rd 1763.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated November 20th 1763.

§ An old retired field officer, a relative and friend of the family.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 15th 1764.

produce the most advantageous results his talents will permit, for he has, as in certain pears, a part that is stony and another soft *.

Meanwhile, the Marquis was soon persuaded that his regimen was too lenient, and that a stricter was necessary, "to the inquisitive and devouring nature of that rascal. You are acquainted with the noble and almost romantic soul of Segrais. He is quite taken with him, he is fascinated; he extols that memory which absorbs every thing, without being willing to understand that sand also receives every impression, and that it is not sufficient to receive, but it should also retain and keep. He magnifies the urchin's goodness of heart, which is only a faint and common-place kindness towards the little creatures who place him at his ease, and to whom he is allied by an instinct of meanness. He vaunts his parrot mind; in short, he will make him worse, and I must look to it †."

The unfatherly tone, let us rather say, the animosity of such language, was the forerunner of severe measures, which we find realised some weeks after.

"My rude son is at last placed in a residence well suited to his deserts. Willing to give him the

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated April 2nd 1764.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated June 2nd 1764.

finishing stroke by a public education, I have placed him with the Abbé Choquard *. This man is stern, and enforces punishment when necessary. I have told him not to be sparing of it, and have given him my reasons. This last attempt made and fulfilled, should there be no amendment, as I hope for none, I shall send him from this part of the country †."

Separated from Sigrais, whom he tenderly loved, placed in a school which they made appear to him like a severe prison, Gabriel experienced, in addition, an increase of chastisement, more than usually irksome.

" As I did not wish that a name shining with some lustre should be bandied along the benches of a school of correction, I had him entered under the name of Peter Buffière ‡. This obstinate boy wept and reasoned to no purpose. I told him to earn my name, and I would restore it to him, but only when he deserved it ‖."

Meanwhile, however sad these presages, the faults did not continue like the punishment. The amendment of which the Marquis had no hope, as the reader has just seen, was obtained by the solicitude, at first

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* The Abbé Choquart kept at Paris a military school in high repute.

† Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 2nd 1764.

‡ Name of an estate, in Limousin, belonging to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

‖ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 8th 1764.

austere, afterwards affectionate, of the Abbé Choquart, who declared, "that he had more than half subdued and reclaimed Mr. Peter Buffière *;" and Gabriel began all at once to learn with a rapidity and success such as was never before witnessed. He assiduously exercised his memory, which afterwards became a prodigious repository of the most diversified knowledge, and in several respects the most elaborate. He studied the classic dead languages, and we have a thousand proofs of his tenacity of memory in this respect. He joined to it the study of modern tongues, such as English, Italian, German, and Spanish, all of which were familiar to him from his youth. He applied himself passionately to mathematics †, picturesque and geometrical

* Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated July 17th 1764.

† In the Biographical Essay, published in 1800 (and republished in 1820) by the younger Gassicourt, it is stated in page 43 of the first edition and 39 of the second, that Mirabeau could never acquire mathematics, although he himself has written that he worked at them "from his tenderest youth." (Original letters from Vincennes, vol. ii. page 289). The refutation is in the following passage from one of the letters from the same collection.

"In two years I have got on in mathematics beyond the differential and integral calculus." (same Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. page 24); and the truth of Mirabeau's assertions are proved by domestic documents. We say no more on this subject, further than to declare what we shall by and by prove: that there are almost as many errors as facts in this notice, as well as in all the others. The reason is simple: the authors, instead of limiting

drawing. Music, which he played at sight, and which he investigated even to the dryness of composition, and singing, in which he excelled, were his favourite recreations. Riding, fencing, dancing, swimming, and tennis were his exercises, and in them he distinguished himself above all the young men of his years.

At this period (1764) a detection took place which constituted the most bitter of the Marquis's grievances against his wife, and produced an increase of his habitual and persevering rigour towards his son *. It appears that the latter, already necessitous, and deprived of everything by the harshness, perhaps less parsimonious than systematic, of his father, secretly received certain pecuniary aids from the Marchioness, then an exile from her husband's house.

"I have learned that she used to send money to that reprobate. It is a singular plague to ha e a

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themselves to speak of Mirabeau as a public man, whom all the world knows, were desirous of writing his private life with which they were unacquainted, because they wanted documents worthy of credit.

* The feelings of the Marquis towards one and the other, may be judged of from the following passage:—

"The twenty years which I have passed with this woman have been so much time spent in fits of the gravel. In the time of my greatest anguish, I said to Madame de Pailly—'This is nothing; the real cause of my vexation is her son, who is growing up to man's estate.'"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 14th 1777.*

wife who has led me a sad life for the last twenty years, and now employs the means she does, or does not possess in debauching the rotten part of my family *."

Gabriel, carried away by the fire of his age and temperament, and by his prodigious faculties, surrounded by the snares of hatred, and blackened in the jealous eyes of his father, was debarred from all correspondence with or counsel from the maternal branch of his family.

" I am told that the grandmother † is greatly offended at not hearing from him. I reply that his youth is too fiery; and that I have ordered that all correspondence shall be cut off from without."

" I replied, that in consequence of the wildness of his youthful temper, I had given orders that he should hold no correspondence with any one; that if he profits by the education he is now receiving, he will not be wanting in the respect he owes to his family, and that henceforward they may rely upon me on this score ‡."

It appears that at this period the Marquis of Mirabeau's domestic advisers, who, in their hatred, were conti-

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count (since Marquis) du Saillant, his son-in-law, dated August 30th 1764.

† The Marchioness of Vassan, mother of the Marchioness of Mirabeau.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 31st 1764.

nually exciting him against his son, first suggested the project of sending away Gabriel, then fifteen years and a half old *.

" Peter Buffière was going away, and he suspected that it was not to better his condition. A deputation from his companions came to me, with a large scroll of a petition, signed by them all. I consented to his remaining with them for three months longer, during which time I shall have him narrowly watched. This looks as if we had gained some ground during the last three months, for at that time nobody would keep him. I am, however, well aware that it will only make me carry my cross instead of burying it *.

This father, however, whose mind was thus kept in a state of constant irritation, appeared for a time to experience his former fluctuations. Alone at Paris, free from the malevolent suggestions of Madame de Pailly and her worthy allies, he seemed for a time restored to his own impressions.

" I must tell you, that although I have still much to do, I entertain some hope of reclaiming the eldest, who, after all, should he cease being a madman, will turn out a rogue that will manage to get on †."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1782.

† Unpublished Letter of the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated February 14th 1766. It was about this time that

But the Marquis soon became a prey to gloomy suspicion, being again influenced by perfidious advice. New plans of exile entered his mind.

" Your brother-in-law is so unruly, that his friends and masters, who for such a length of time have misled me with vain hopes, no longer conceal from me the truth about him. I shall leave him there* until, according to my plan, I send him to the north, and shall take such steps as will prevent this scourge from

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the extraordinary reply attributed to Mirabeau, then sixteen years old, by P. Chaussard (see private life at the commencement of the 'Esprit de Mirabeau,' vol. i. p. 12, and Cadet Gassicourt, page 5 of the first edit., and page 3 of the second), must have taken place. According to their accounts, the Prince of Conti, surprised at the bold and determined expression of the child's countenance, said to him—

" What would you do if I were to box your ears? "

Mirabeau is reported to have answered:—" The question would have puzzled me before the invention of double-barrelled pistols."

We cannot persuade ourselves to attribute this silly and heartless joke to a prince who always proved himself brave and generous in war; for the anecdote can relate only to the last Prince of Conti but one (Louis Francis, born August 13th 1717, and who died August 2nd 1776). Besides, it is sufficient to recollect that Mirabeau, as we have just shown, was, at the age of sixteen, kept under such severe restraint, that there is not the least probability of his having been allowed to visit princes. The anecdote must therefore be made to relate to the period of his presentation (see Book III. of this work). But, in 1771, he was two and twenty years of age, and at that time both the answer and the question would have been not only improbable but impossible.

* At the Abbé Choquart's boarding school.

appearing at those places where he would hang upon me like a log *."

He, however, soon entertained a more natural design, that of making Gabriel enter the army.

"Your brother-in-law is continually weeping over his disgrace. He has tried another letter. I have sent him word that to err and to forgive is the way of God towards man, and of man to God; but that between man and man the distance is too great for it to be thus. For a long time to come there will be two men in him: the one heedless who will forget the penitent, and the other penitent who will recollect the heedless. What is to be done? We are moulds of imperfection. As, however, we must advance with increasing years, your brother-in-law is going to change his leading-strings, being about to enter rather a rough school, which the Marquis of Beuvron has recommended to me. This is the Berri cavalry, commanded by the young Marquis of Lambert, a man of rare qualities, and much feared on account of his severity. He receives young men as volunteers, and keeps a tight hand over them †."

"With regard to my sons," says the Marquis, in another letter, "the eldest is still a cross. I am going

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated December the 13th 1766.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated February 28th 1767.

to send him as a volunteer to the strictest and roughest military school. The Marquis of Lambert, a man put together like one of the good old times, has founded this school in his regiment. He asserts that the exclusive atmosphere of honour, and a cold and harsh regimen, are capable of curing the most disordered lungs, even were the disease a natural one. I asked him for a Mentor, an officer who, without reasoning or eloquence, possessed instinctively a natural contempt and disgust for every thing mean. He told me that his man answers this description. I have in fact seen two fathers thank him for having formed their sons *. In everything Lambert is as much feared as the grand-provost; and his major, whom he will appoint my son's Mentor, is just as severe as I could wish. I rely upon Grévin † as another Mentor, and as sole master-servant to this young man. I was asked for a man whom he might know as having instructions from me to watch and denounce him, in order that he may not consider himself an object of military espionage, a bad system among respectable people. I shall feel no reluctance in being severe towards him, because it is both my right and my duty ‡."

On the 19th of July 1767, Gabriel joined the

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated 31st March 1767.

† See page 273.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated March 21st 1767. To a[v]oid repetiti[on], at least in the text, we here insert an extract from th[e] [w]hich

Marquis of Lambert's regiment *. We find this stated in the following passage of a letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau :—

" Your brother-in-law joined his corps on the 19th, and he now opens a new source of uneasiness to me. When a man assumes the duties of father of a family, he must be prepared for every event. Providence has kept me free from yielding to the desire of repose †."

Other letters show that the young volunteer behaved well; and from his very entrance into the service, at the age of eighteen, he gave indications of those military talents he afterwards displayed, in a profession for which he had a special vocation ‡. Evidence of this good conduct is found in the testimony of his father himself, who was very sparing of praise.

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the Marquis of Mirabeau expresses himself nearly in the same terms.

" This young Marquis of Lambert, who is of the stuff of which men were made in by-gone times, and whose chest resembles those formerly covered with cuirasses, says, that in obliging a man to breathe nothing but honour, you renew his lungs. I doubt it; but he says he has seen many instances of it.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillan, dated July 17th 1767.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated July 26th 1767.

‡ " What I was especially born for, unless I greatly mistake, was for the military profession—because there only I am cool, collected, lively without impetuosity, and I feel that I become greater."—*Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated September 11th* 1780.

"I have received good news, and am going to get him a commission *."

But an unexpected occurrence, although it might easily have been foreseen, soon after kindled the anger of the Marquis. Gabriel lost forty louis at play, whilst with his regiment, although he was by no means fond of gambling, to which indeed he never became addicted at any period of his life. He had also contracted a few debts, a fault which, on the other hand, he frequently committed, and which, of all his errors, appeared the least excusable in his father's opinion.

The Marquis, however, was the constant cause of it, by his frequently injudicious refusal of supplying him with the money which the rank and fortune of the family justified, and Gilbert's age and military and social station really required. Contracting debts, under any circumstances, was unjustifiable according to the notions of the Marquis, who thus expresses himself on the subject:—

"He is indeed cast in the mould of his maternal race, who would dissipate twenty inheritances and twelve kingdoms if placed within their reach! But at all events, I shall not endure more from this one than I

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768. The commission was one of sub-lieutenant.

choose, and a cold and well closed prison shall moderate his appetite and reduce his bulk *."

After this "prank, which did not pass off without some noise †," and an incident which we shall presently mention, Mirabeau secretly quitted his corps, and sought refuge at Paris with his father's intimate friend, the Duke of Nivernois, to whom, either with justice, or merely as an excuse for his conduct, he complained most bitterly of the Marquis of Lambert's harshness, and even cruelty,—"a parcel of recriminating lies, almost persuasive by their eloquent effrontery ‡." Nothing could equal the violence of the Marquis's language on the occasion.

"With regard to this scoundrel, I cannot precisely say what it costs me to cast him from me ||. It was this that sealed his doom §. From the moment I saw, by his letter to the Duke of Nivernois, the turn he gave to his romance, I felt the bolt which already shuts him out from my heart more firmly closed;

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 30th 1768.

† Unpublished Letter from the Countess of Rochefort to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 2nd 1768.

‡ Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

|| Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 26th 1768.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 28th 1768.

and when I reflected upon this hideous assemblage of anti-truths and ingratitude, I felt my father's spirit reproach me for having entertained any hope from this wretch after so many trials *"

Such language, applied to a young man of eighteen, and from a father who had declared that "he should feel no reluctance in adopting a course of severity †," was an earnest of violent measures. Count du Saillant, however, interfered, and took charge of his brother-in-law, "whom he confined in the Hotel Nivernois, surrounding him with spies, and having discovered his connexion with a set of thieves, conveyed him, six and thirty hours after, to Saintes ‡, where his regiment was in garrison.

An explanation took place "in presence of the colonel, the lieutenant-colonel, and the Mentor Grévin ||." Gabriel alone, in the presence of his superiors, his enemies, and a brother-in-law armed with full powers by an irritated father, defended himself with energy. He alleged, with regard to the losses at play, the seduction, no doubt preconcerted, perhaps instigated, of an example

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

† Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 21st 1767.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 26th 1768.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768.

too strong for a young volunteer of eighteen. With regard to the discipline, he alleged the excessive severity of a commander who inspired as much dread as the "grand provost *;" a severity, we must however observe, that had an effect directly contrary upon the ardent and lofty soul of Gabriel, who, at a later period said, "A Lambert was capable of ruining me, a Viomenil might have obtained everything from me†:" and who, even at that time, expressed himself with great energy. This may be seen in the following passage from a letter written a short time prior to his departure for Corsica.

"A colonel, unworthy of commanding officers better than himself, used every possible means to ruin me. He did not succeed, but I will not expose myself a second time to his perfidy; for I swear, upon my honour —an oath I shall never break—that I will resign my commission, and enter a foreign service, if I am forced to continue under him ‡."

But a pecuniary loss was not the only censurable act committed by the young officer: another was discovered. The Marquis of Lambert had fallen in love with the young and beautiful daughter of an archer of Saintes.

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* Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1767.

† Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. page 295.

‡ Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 5th 1769.

She had produced the same effect upon Mirabeau, and, as is customary in such cases, the sub-lieutenant supplanted the colonel. The latter, naturally harsh, and previously prejudiced, authorised and instigated, moreover, by Mirabeau's father and by Grévin, insulted his more fortunate rival, or caused, or allowed it to be done, by a gross caricature, which made Mirabeau the laughing-stock of the whole regiment. Lambert then made the authority of his rank minister to his wounded self-love. Gabriel, thus punished beyond measure, and being perfectly well aware of the cause of this severity, quitted his post while on duty, and fled to Paris, where, as we have just stated, he complained to no purpose.

The inquiry made at Saintes, on his return, proved to be the monstrous phenomenon of a love affair. "It even discovers a promise of marriage, and every other species of madness *." Count du Saillant and the Colonel, "those worthy and zealous young men, set out for Rochelle, and the Marquis of Lambert withdrew the writings. The rascal is to be imprisoned. His brother-in-law, who has spoken so much in his favour, is now forced to admit that the fellow is a sink of vice. All this may be termed shocking for the head, the stomach, and the purse of your elder brother, and as you can do

* Unpublished Letter, already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th 1768. The totally different account given by Peuchet, vol i. page 74, is mere invention.

nothing in it, I should have done wisely if I had said nothing to you about it. But it is most difficult to keep one's heart entirely closed toward those whom we love and esteem *."

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* Letter already quoted from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 24th. At the very time that the Marquis evinced so little the feelings of a parent towards his son, he was most actively engaged in an undertaking altogether philanthropic. At his country seat, at Fleury, near Meudon, which he had bought for his mother, he built ovens for the purpose of baking bread, on an economical plan, which was extolled by the sect to which he belonged.

"The Abbé Bandeau is staying permanently with us. We are are making economical bread. The rascally bakers deceived us in the samples made at Paris. We bake six hundred pounds weight of it every day in my oven. Poor people scramble for it. It has got into vogue. The Duke of Choiseul sends twice a-week a messenger for Fleury-bread, and so does Madame du Deffant. Only conceive what it is to have reduced Madame du Deffant to home-made bread! What odd people! In all the provinces and on every estate of any note, mills for economical grinding are erected. You should reflect upon this; it becomes a duty. Think what it is to procure for the poor a saving of more than a third in the price of previous consumption!"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 3rd* 1768.

"I have here a bakehouse, in which nine hundred pounds of bread are daily baked for the poor; and if my oven enabled me to make double that quantity, it would be consumed. Instead of being expensive, there is, as you will perceive in the 'Ephémérides'—'Notice to honest men,' a profit which may be made available for streets or other public works. I am going this winter to introduce economical grinding and a similar bakehouse at Bignon. If God grant me life, I shall have these ovens everywhere. I shall give you an account of the immense advantage they are of to the people. Here I buy the corn, but there, where I have my own corn, my own

This is, in all its simplicity, and according to unexceptionable documents even furnished by Mirabeau's adversaries, the fact which, having been exaggerated by prejudiced enemies, caused his first imprisonment, laid the foundation of the system of excessive severity always pursued against him, and served as the foundation of all those suspicions and accusations that always afterwards beset him. If we have dwelt upon it, and supported it by extracts, which, if they are not useless are at any rate tedious, our object was merely to present in its true light an incident upon which, from Mirabeau's earliest youth, were founded the charges of immorality that have been heaped upon his head, and to prove the sincerity of his own eloquent account of the matter †.

Let the following paragraph from it be read over again, as a justification not discussed, which may have left some doubt in the reader's mind.

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mill, and my own flour, I shall send the bannal right to the devil *, and leave every one at liberty. The people sell their corn, and I supply them with flour, and what is more, with bread, which is much cheaper, and saves them the labour of kneading improperly and at a loss. I am still hatching much more expensive plans."— *Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 18th* 1768.

† Original Letters written from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 196.

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* Let us state, for the information of those who might not be aware of it, that bannal right was a seigneurial right to compel the inhabitants to have their corn ground at the lord's mill.

"You confessed to me, in one of your letters, that you had been on the point of sending me to the Dutch colonies, whilst I was detained in the Island of Rhé. This made a deep impression on my mind, and has had a prodigious influence over the rest of my life."

It has been said, and even published, in the name of the Marquis of Mirabeau, that this intention never existed, but was invented by the prisoner to give some plausibility to his defence, and to gain more pity, by relating imaginary persecutions. Our readers shall judge for themselves.

We perceive by the letters before us that the effect of the dreadful accusations of the Marquis, a man of some consideration in the world, and much respected in his own family, made his excellent brother a sharer in his exaggerated resentment, so much so that the Bailli wrote—

"Examine whether the crimes of this wretch deserve that he should be for ever excluded from society; in that case, sending him to the Dutch colonies is, as you say, the best thing to be done. We shall then be sure never again to see on the horizon a scoundrel born to bring sorrow to his parents and disgrace to his family *."

Such is the language, held under the father's influ-

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 10th 1768.

ence by the Bailli, a man noble and virtuous, prudent and moderate, and even indulgent, whom we shall show hereafter alternately accusing and defending his nephew, according as Gabriel, being absent, was unable to ward off the blows dealt by a continually increasing aversion; or, being momentarily placed with his uncle, was able to combat with explanations, or to deny by his conduct, the calumny which from his infancy had unremittingly been cast upon him, and remained coupled with his name even beyond the grave.

Let us examine, for a moment, the fatal effect of the Marquis's prejudices upon his brother, bearing in mind that the latter, besides his natural kindness of heart, and habitual mildness of character, produced by age, reflection, and experience of men and things, possessed, in his personal recollections and his conscience, some grounds of excuse for the impetuosity of a very young man, as he himself had once displayed no inconsiderable share of the exaggeration peculiar to the blood of Mirabeau. A specimen of the Bailli's follies when young, is contained in the following passage.

" I well know the character of my race. I, in some measure, bore witness of the Bailli's youth. During three or four years he did not spend four days in the course of the year out of prison. The moment he beheld the light of day he would drink brandy till he was furious, and then fall upon every man who came in his way, till he got knocked down, and taken to prison.

But he was, notwithstanding, very honourable, and his superiors, then men of great experience, always promised my mother that he would one day become an excellent man. Nobody however could stop him, till he all of a sudden stopped himself *."

The Colonel, having thus punished Mirabeau in his self-love and in his attachment, might undoubtedly have considered himself sufficiently avenged: but he was not yet satisfied, neither was the Marquis.

" I have been employed only in assuaging the impatience of M. de Lambert, who, never thinking of distances †, had hardly written to me, when he was disappointed at the non-arrival of all he had asked me for, and of some plan of arrangement. As I requested M. de Choiseul to avoid noise as much as possible, he proposed to send an order to Mr. Peter Buffière to take a letter to Marshal de Senneterre, at Rochelle, who would immediately have arrested and sent him to the Island of Rhé ‡."

The father's bitter resentment was thus fomented by the implacable colonel. Another persecutor of Gabriel, Grévin §, his ignoble Mentor, and Madame de Pailly's

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 26th 1770.

† One hundred and twenty leagues.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 16th 1768.

§ See page 283.

worthy auxiliary, had also a spite against the unfortunate young man.

"On the other hand, I have received a letter from Grévin. It is in to the usual style; but he speaks plain, calls the fellow a 'horrible monster,' presses me for my orders, and adds that he is capable of any thing *."

Let us now observe, in order that we may not have occasion to recur to it, that the animosity which the father had conceived against his son blinded him with respect to Grévin, as he continued to believe this man as a witness, and to employ him as a mentor, we might almost have said as an executioner, notwithstanding the opinion of the judicious Bailli, who wrote the following year—

"The man to whom you have confided him has spent some time here (the castle of Mirabeau), and is neither competent nor worthy to hold this trust †."

Let us further show, before we proceed, the striking contrast between this harshness and parental severity, and the other points of the Marquis of Mirabeau's character. This haughty parent describes himself in a letter written at nearly the same period.

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* The same Letter, from the Marquis to the Bailli, dated September 16th 1768.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 23rd 1769.

"You amuse me in speaking of the respectful terror which my future son-in-law * experiences at the moment he is about to pay me a visit. In general, from the noble bent in your back, your long and cold features, your hair prematurely grey †, and my right of primogeniture, people will naturally conclude, when they have seen you, and know me only from report, that I must be venerable, for venerable is now-a-days the polite term of my correspondents. But mind and tell them that I am the fellow with the big stick, who walks round the Luxembourg gardens in seventeen minutes, has not a single grey hair, and wants either a looking-glass, or to be pulled by the sleeve seventy times a day to be reminded that he is more than twenty;—who is, moreover, the friend of all who have never seen him; who, neither by himself nor by his shadow, was ever in any person's way; who never brought fear, nor embarrassment, nor evil to any body; who feels more than most men all it becomes his age to subdue; who supports all that is little, especially youth, which he is bound to uphold by the chin; and who contrives to be known and loved in a quarter of an hour ‡."

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* Jean Paul Clapier, Marquis of Cabris, who married, November 18th 1769, Louisa, third daughter of the Marquis of Mirabeau.

† The Bailli of Mirabeau was not fifty years old.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 30th 1769.

We have stated that Mirabeau was about to be confined in the fortress of the Island of Rhé.

"Do not trouble yourself any more about that good-for-nothing fellow. I think he is now engaged in the Island of Rhé, and properly recommended to the Bailli of Aulan. The Bailli's reputation is excellent; he is another witness which I am about to procure, as it is expedient to collect evidence from persons of some consequence, to keep the bolts of the gaol closed *."

"The Bailli of Aulan will be his future judge. I have only stated to him that the youth is impetuous, his judgment unsound, and that he is a liar by instinct. I have ordered Grévin to accompany him. You may easily conceive that if the Bailli condemns him he shall be removed †."

Yes, to go and die at Surinam!

What then was the cause of this prejudice in the Marquis—a prejudice which overcame his reason, in other respects strong and clear? It was a feeling more powerful than nature, which however acted in him; for numerous domestic papers show him to have been a good master, a good lord, and an excellent friend. Moreover, there are a thousand proofs that he evinced, towards his mother, a filial reverence akin to adoration.

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* Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated August 7th 1768.

† Unpublished Letters from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau and to the Countess of Rochefort, dated Sept. 20th and 22nd 1768.

How happened it, then and afterwards, that the effect of suggestions which tormented him at home, and to which the very cause whence they sprang should have prevented him from listening, did not yield to the disinterested evidence of strangers, totally free from any ground of suspicion, and of which he even spoke himself, without in the least inferring what must naturally have struck a mind less swayed by prejudice than his own?

"He is a rascal who possesses Satan's power of intrigue, and has the wit of a demon. The Marquis of Lambert told me the other day that he had divided the town and the province between reason and himself, and that, notwithstanding his detestable character, he could have found in the town of Saintes twenty thousand livres, which it does not possess *."

Mirabeau's influence thus described arose rather from his frankness and generosity than from any superiority of mind that he already displayed. He exercised the same power over all who were near him; and perhaps no man carried it to a greater extent. The

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated Oct. 18th 1768. Six years later other circumstances suggested to the Marquis a remark, the similitude of which is curious.

"Had he the disgraceful talent alone of making dupes, he would deserve only to be hanged. A merchant of Dijon said to Gassaud: 'he gets a great deal out of me, but all I possess is quite at his service.'"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 2nd 1778.*

grievous injustice, which youth feels so strongly and repulses with so much vigour, did not spoil his excellent temper: he was easily appeased—a single demonstration could move, a word affect him.

"Lambert was still speaking when a sudden change took place: Peter Buffière gave up all his connexions, and promised to submit to imprisonment. He begged, as a favour, that Grévin might be left with him. (This was magnanimous!) He promised not to go out before the Marquis of Lambert came back, and then to return to the regiment, where he had so much to retrieve *."

No doubt this prompt and noble return affects the reader; but the heart of an infatuated father is not so easily softened.

"For my part, I wrote to him (the Marquis of Lambert) that this fool's clapper had been removed from the bell of the disconsolate prisoner and passionate lover; and that we should derive no other advantage from it than that of removing him without any noise that could be prejudicial to the family †."

At the Island of Rhé, as at Saintes, at Paris, and everywhere else, the unfortunate young man, whom a father had condemned without seeing or hearing him,

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated October 1st 1768.

† Same Letter.

inspired every one with interest. We are informed of it by his father.

" He bewitches the Bailli of Aulan himself, who, against my directions, permits him to walk in the citadel. He also fascinates my friends and the whole world *."

Mirabeau, on the other hand, wrote to his mother:—

" My affairs have taken a more favourable turn; the Bailli of Aulan, governor of the island, solicits the withdrawal of my *lettre de cachet*, and it seems decided that I shall soon proceed to Corsica †."

An expedition was actually in preparation. In one of the Marquis of Mirabeau's letters we find—

" I know very well, that when once let loose he will, within three months, provoke his confinement for life. However, I cannot keep Mr. Peter Buffière any longer in his cage, nor lose the opportunity of Corsica ‡. He is to accompany the legion of Lorraine, and serve in the infantry §, under the command of the Baron of Vioménil, Colonel of the legion. It is quite a different

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 15th 1769.

† The Letter already quoted, from Mirabeau to his mother, dated March 5th 1769.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 27th 1769.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 13th 1769.

discipline to the former. I do not hope, however, that he will acquit himself better *."

Mirabeau, when about to complete his twentieth year, was preparing to quit his prison, or rather to exchange it for another. Loaded by his father with gloomy suspicions, sinister prognostics, prejudicial recommendations, and anticipated curses, he embraced a new career only to encounter greater fatigue and danger.

" The Baron of Viomênil, Colonel of the legion of Lorraine, has been represented to me as a proper man for him, and I have also been told that this service will suit his impetuosity. He fancies he can swallow every thing, but will get nothing but plenty of sword-thrusts, if he has the courage to face them. He has been recommended to them all; Count Devaux himself † told me, that they would hang him at the public expense if he did not prove worthy of his father‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, dated April 22nd 1769.

† Afterwards Marshal of France

‡ Letter already quoted, from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, bearing date March 13th 1769. As the Marquis of Mirabeau was writing that very day to his second son, Andrew Boniface Louis, afterwards Viscount of Mirabeau, then fifteen years of age (he was born the 30th of November 1754), he softened his parental remonstrances with a tone of affection.

" Mr. Boniface, I am at least satisfied with your writing. But I am sure that you commit thirty-eight dozen of follies every day, and this makes my blood boil. Not that every body does not commit some while young, but yours should not warn every body

When Mirabeau left the island of Rhé, he met an officer at Rochelle who had been dismissed the service for a disgraceful action. This person wanted to become intimate with his young companion in arms, and took offence at Mirabeau's proper and prudent coldness. A duel ensued, in which the aggressor was wounded *. On this the reputable Grévin resumed his task.

" This devilish Peter Buffière is come out of the fortress of Rhé, a hundred times worse than he entered in; not through any of his companions there, but by dint of his own folly. He fought a duel at Rochelle, where he had been only two hours. I have had tidings from that poor Grévin, from Saint Jean d'Angely, and

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how little you mind yourself, and that if promotions were made in an inverse order, your marshal's baton would elevate you to the rank of commissioner of the stew-pan, and still it would be said, 'He is a good sort of fellow.' In fact, my friend, if you do not perceive where you are (with his brother-in-law Count du Saillant) how kindness may be allied to true dignity, all our care is thrown away upon you, and you too will remain incorrigible. This matter at least appertains as much to your interest as to mine. I received my name illustrious in the opinion of men, through the merit of those who had borne it; I shall leave it to my children in a favourable and creditable light. If they neglect to cultivate this portion of their inheritance, I would not give two farthings for the rest, and they will be beggars, though there are good kind of fellows even among them. This is, therefore, your business: think of it. Adieu! I shall wait till you are cleansed to embrace you."— *Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Chevalier Mirabeau, dated March 13th* 1769.

* Unpublished Letter from Peter Buffière to Count du Saillant, dated March 20th 1769.

from Dupuy. I am told that he struts about, swearing, fighting, wounding, and committing villanies such as were never heard of before *. This wretch would foil the devil, and has a score in his body †."

After a fatiguing, and even perilous journey in the mountains of Auvergne and the Vivarais, which he was obliged to cross through snow that lay twelve feet thick ‡, Peter Buffière arrived at Toulon, where his father told him most expressly that he was to take care not to be recognised. A letter makes us acquainted with the date of his departure.

" He will embark on the 16th of April 1769, on the plain which furrows itself; God grant that he does not some day use the oar there § !"

We shall incidentally remark that the Marquis was then disposing of the hand of his youngest daughter, whom he tenderly loved. The coincidence of this marriage with Mirabeau's departure gave the father an opportunity of expressing himself very differently respecting his two children.

" The nuptials of my daughter, a favour of Pro-

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, April 10th 1769.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, June 19th 1769.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, April 22nd 1769.

§ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, April 10th 1769.

vidence, though not a festivity in which a parent is free from anxiety, will be placed between the fear of losing an interesting and precious generation*, and the

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 10th 1769. A former proposal of marriage had afforded the Marquis an opportunity of displaying that pride of nobility, to which his family were prone.

"I can arrange a marriage for Louisa (afterwards Madame de Cabris, then fourteen years of age) at any time. 1st, an income of three hundred thousand livres; 2ndly, a young man, well made, and kind—a virtuous character eighteen years of age. This is the fine side. See now the other:—the father, who is dead, was a farmer of the public revenue, and my fathers were never allied to publicans."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated June 28th* 1766.

"I have been indirectly informed that Madame de Pompignan would willingly have given us her son D'Orsay, who has an income of 300,000 francs a year. My first feeling was that I should deserve reproach from my ancestors for such an alliance, and that it would disgrace me personally, after the anti-financial noise I have made. A young counsellor, all lined with gold, has also been proposed to me, and I have not been able to come to any determination, owing to my daily habit of being only humbly addressed in some measure by men of that class. There is not one who does not in his letters load me with *respect*, though I am good for nothing, and dare to make them some return. I have received among other things, during the last ten years, a letter from a First President, beginning with these words:—'Sir, you are the protector of all the magistrates in the kingdom!' The idea respecting the duty of not allowing our children to derogate, founded on such delusions, might well prove without foundation; but my daughter, worthy of us, and of being consulted, replied, respecting these two proposals:—'I shall never change my name for a worse. I do not know what use to make of riches; but if they are necessary, I feel that I shall be able to acquire them for the family of which I may become a member.' She was then but twelve years old!—an excellent age. at which,

desire of getting rid of another which is odious, and incessantly keeps hot coals under my feet, and a sword suspended over my head."

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whilst playing near your father and mother, who were seriously discussing the future prospects of their children, you said to them —'Be not uneasy on my account; I shall manage to get on!'"— *Unpublished Letters from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 16th, and August 3rd 1768.*

MEMOIRS OF MIRABEAU.

BOOK III.

It is well known how, after many a battle and alternate ill-fortune and success too dearly bought, the Genoese who, since the thirteenth century, had succeeded the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Goths, and the Saracens in the possession of Corsica, were, in 1767, compelled to give up to France a domination which, though enforced, had ever been disputed by the spirit of independence inherent in an obstinate and warlike people. This cession did not render the Corsicans more disposed to submission than before. The French troops, commanded by the Marquis of Chauvelin, a general from the court, had experienced humiliations and losses. The courtier was superseded by the warrior; and Count Devaux, an experienced and active officer, supported by a considerable force, succeeded in a short time in putting down every insurrection.

This expedition had neither the interest of a defensive war, the charm of a daring invasion, nor the

excitement of conquest. It was merely an unjust abuse of power, the mere brutal act of a purchaser taking possession by force. It had therefore no attraction for Mirabeau's fancy; it had nothing in common with his inclinations. But, on the one hand, his notions were yet the mere goadings of instinct, and had not been matured into fixed principles. On the other hand, his taking a part in this war was the only means he had of getting out of prison. However, he soon viewed it in its proper light; and, at a subsequent period, we shall show him ascending the national tribune to abjure his forced participation in that expedition, and brand it as unjust and odious *.

Having arrived in Corsica, with the rank of second lieutenant†, Mirabeau distinguished himself by his zeal, his ardour, and his military talents, which even Lambert was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge. This was the result of his constant application. He won the esteem, affection, and confidence of the severe Viomenil, who subsequently gave him such proofs of it as must

* Session of the 30th of November, 1789. "I confess that my early youth was sullied by a participation in the conquest of Corsica; and I consider myself the more bound to make some reparation to that generous people, for what my reason condemns as a cruel injustice.

† Unpublished notes, in the form of a reference, to the autograph manuscript of the elaborate defence, addressed by Mirabeau to his father, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes, March 1st, 1778, page 287 to 436 of the first volume.

appear conclusive*. He was also noticed by the Viscount of Harembure, by Lieutenant-General Devaux, and by Major-General Guibert†. He obtained the friendship of Lieutenant-Colonel Villereau of his own regiment‡. In a word, his father, who, in allusion to him, had at first only thought proper to say, "This Corsican rover, who is about to attain his twenty-first year, and who, with his sense and skill, joined to a bad heart, would give plenty of work to an areopagus§;" his father, let us say, expressed himself in far different terms six weeks after.

"He has evinced remarkable bravery and intelligence‖. He likes his corps and his commanders, and has many friends¶. As for his skill and sense, he has an active mind, and studies eight hours a day; he, perhaps, has not his equal. But God knows what kind of a headpiece we shall see**."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, from the 5th to the 11th of May 1771.

† Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. p. 162, 190; vol. ii. p. 23.

‡ Same letters from the Donjon, vol. i. p. 161.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 21st 1770.

‖ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

¶ Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

** The Letter already alluded to from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

Confining ourselves merely to these few incidents, the only ones that remain of this first year of Mirabeau's life, we shall not allow ourselves to be detained by his love adventures in Corsica, of which there fortunately appeared only a short and fugitive account*. We have, however, some lengthy particulars in a very humorous and original style, written by himself. We at first curtailed and afterwards destroyed them, for as we are determined to keep within the bounds of that respect which the subject, the times, the public, and history require, we did not wish to add to the facts, and especially to the surmises of this nature, which are already but too plentifully scattered over Mirabeau's memory. Whenever, in the course of our labours, we have to handle some awkward episode which has been so much before the public as to preclude its omission or curtailment, we shall state it both with reserve and regret; and merely when necessary to reduce exaggerations to the just measure of truth, to rectify important facts, to prove the falsehood of calumny, and to set the character of Mirabeau in its proper light; for he has been as much misjudged by all men in his private life, as he has been by some in his political career. But be they explanations, illustrations, or denials relative to matters of a domestic nature or to public facts, we shall always support them with unimpeachable evidence.

* Original Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 438.

Mere hearsay, conjectures, and unsubstantiated assertions, which form the materials of so many biographies*, would but ill accord with a family work like the present.

This same necessity for truth, free from all hazardous and romantic additions, render it incumbent upon us to notice the first work, which, as it occupied the already striking mind of Mirabeau, displayed the natural propensity for writing, peculiar to his family, and gave him practice.

A eulogy on the great Condé compared with Scipio Africanus, has been mentioned, which he is said to have written, spoken, and, according to some, even published when only sixteen years of age, whilst he was at the Abbé Choquart's military school. As we have resolved to admit nothing in our biography but facts which are proved, and to reject that which is evidently false, it behoves us to say that the family never had any knowledge of this production, said to be the fruit of Mirabeau's youth; that its existence is not substantiated in any account of him; nor do we even find the slightest indication of it in the voluminous correspondence we possess, the link of which is quite unbroken, and commences a long time prior to his birth. It presents us, during the first thirty years of his life,

* The Dictionaries.—Chaussard, Cadet Gassicourt, Barthe, Peuchet, Mérilhou, &c. &c.

with almost daily particulars concerning his position, his impressions, and his labours.

There results, however, a strong presumption in its favour, from a letter published in 1776, in the "Gazette Littéraire," which may be ascribed to Mirabeau, as we shall show hereafter. We find in the text—

"At this time, 1769, some trifles of the Count of Mirabeau were printed;" and in a note, "'A Eulogy on the great Condé,' composed for a public festival, some pieces of poetry," &c.*

But whatever be the truth with regard to this pretended first composition, it is certain that in the course of his twentieth year, amid the marches, labours, and dangers of an irregular warfare, he was seriously occupied in writing a work, which was a miscellany of history, geography, and statistics, and the labour of which, in mere compilations, could not be very attractive to a mind so active as his, and at an age especially characterised by restlessness and impatience.

"At the end of the campaign, the Count of Mirabeau everywhere discovered traces of the devastations committed by the Genoese, and vestiges of their crimes. By this evidence of despotism he recognised his enemy: his heart beating with indignation could not contain itself, and his overflowing imagination, was

* Letter from S. M. (Saint Matthieu) to the authors of the "Gazette Littéraire," at the head of the "Treatise on Despotism." Paris. Lejay, 1792.

highly excited. He wrote, and drew a rapid picture of Corsican misery and Genoese crime*." Such are the terms in which Mirabeau speaks of his first work. Let us now hear his family.

"He has in some measure made himself master of the Corsicans; he has seen all their papers, and written their history, which, from the plan he has shown me, strikes me with surprise. It is a bold and spirited work†. The preface to his History of Corsica, which is to comprise only the last forty years, gives an account of preceding events.

"I assure you that at twenty-one you would not have done as much; and I, at forty, am unable to produce the hundredth part of it. I found that it contained clear principles laid down by a mind full of elevation, fire, nerve, and genius, and by a heart firm, strong, and good‡." Mirabeau himself, though but little inclined to boast of his own writings, being well aware of the defects attendant on habitual precipitation, set some value on this his first production.

"This work was, no doubt, very incorrect, but full of fire and truth; and it contained true views and

* Letter from S. M. (Saint Matthieu) to the author of the "Gazette Littéraire," p. 21. Mirabeau said the same thing in the work entitled "Lettres de Cachet, and State Prisons," vol. ii. p. 127.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

facts relative to a country of which no correct account had ever been given, because mercenary writers (the Germanès) or fanatical enthusiasts (the Boswells) had alone undertaken the task*. Buttafoco, a colonel in the Corsican service, made me write the History of Corsica, and I certainly acquitted myself of it in a manner beyond what might have been expected from my youth. My father would never allow it to be published, notwithstanding the wish of all Corsica, and Buttafoco's entreaties. This was also the case with my topography of the island, which I had described step by step, under a personal survey, giving all possible particulars with regard to its politics, political economy, and history. These manuscripts are in Provence, and God knows whether I shall ever see them again†."

Mirabeau returned after more than a year's absence: this we learn from his father.

"As I had ordered him to travel privately into Provence, I allowed him, if his regimental duty permitted, to go and kiss his uncle's hand at Mirabeau‡."

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* Letter from S. M. to the authors of the Gazette Littéraire, p. 22.

† Unpublished Letter to Sophie, dated May 16th 1778; also unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 23d 1770, and Original Letters, dated from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 90; vol. iii. p. 173.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

On the 8th of May he arrived at Toulon, where, contrary to the orders he had received to keep out of sight, he was recognised by three old schoolfellows, young de Forbin, de Moissac, and de Villeneuve*. He wrote to his uncle to request permission to go and see him; but the Bailli, completely under his brother's influence, hesitated.

"He seemed to me so apprehensive of displeasing you, that when he asked me where he could put up, I advised him to wait at Lambesc† till his regiment arrived. I was anxious to maintain the respect due to a parent's commands, and fearful that if I had him with me his presence might become known."

Mirabeau however persisted.

"Last night (May 14th, 1770) I was quite taken by surprise. A soldier brought me a note from M. Peter Buffière, requesting me to appoint an hour when I could see him. My answer was that he might come. I was delighted with him. My heart was much elated on seeing him. I found him ugly, but he has not a bad countenance; for behind the ravages made by the small-pox, behind features that have undergone great alteration, he has something intellectual, graceful, and noble. If he be not worse than Nero, he is sure to be

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

† The same unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau.

better than Marcus Aurelius. I think I never encountered so much wit; it quite absorbed my poor brains —quite astounded me. He seems to fear you as much as he does the provost; but he swore to me that there was nothing he would not do to please you. He confessed that he had been guilty of many foolish acts, but said that he had been reduced to despair*. He told the Abbé† that he had not been properly trained when a boy, and that his last colonel, Vioménil, had led him on with mildness and reason, and made him discover a new order of things‡ in propriety of conduct. I informed him the other day, that, without wishing to play the schoolmaster over him, I would give him a summary with some reflections for his future conduct. 'PLAY THE SCHOOLMASTER OVER ME!' he replied; 'may all my preceptors employ the same means that you do. Why has this never yet been done§?' The other day, at Castagny, he said that his uncle‖ could make him do anything. It must be admitted that this uncle gave him a very kind reception, treated him like a man, and

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

† The Abbé Castagny, chaplain at the castle of Mirabeau, after 1742.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

§ Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated May 27th 1770.

‖ The Bailli, who writes.

represented to him without pedantry, that both his father and his uncle, of whom the one had acquired celebrity, and the other had gained universal respect from those with whom his humble sphere and talents had made him acquainted, were solely indebted for it to their propriety of conduct, their probity and their kindness*."

"I assure you, therefore, that I found him very repentant of his past misdeeds. He appears to me to have a feeling heart; as for wit, I have already mentioned that: he would cast the very devil into the shade. I tell you once more, he is either the cleverest and ablest banterer in the universe, or he will be the best subject in Europe for either general or admiral, or minister or chancellor, or pope, or anything to which he may choose to apply himself. You were already something at twenty-one, but not half what he is. I, though nothing very great, might then have passed for something. I confess to you, without modesty or false vanity, that although, at thirty-five, during my theatrical sovereignty, I extorted from the Creoles the saying that I was no European†, I was not worthy to play to him the part which Strabo played to Democritus‡. I will

* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

† As Governor of Guadaloupe, in 1754. The Bailli was extremely popular there.

‡ Letter of the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

repeat to you a thousand times that, if this young man does not deceive me, a thing which, on account of old prejudices, I dare not vouch for, but on which I should not mind betting a hundred to one, and, if God grant him life, I much question whether he will differ at all from the greatest of men in anything except his station*. You know that square head of Castagny's; the poor man opens his eyes and weeps for joy. For my own part, this lad cuts open my bosom. What makes me think a great deal of him is, that I find some defects in him; but my not being blind to them, is some security that I do not form a wrong judgment of him†. For three days past I have been ten hours a day in his company, and the Abbé Castagny about thirteen. I can swear to you, and so can the Abbé, that we have found in him some vivacity and fire, and not a word but what denoted honesty of heart, elevation of mind, and power of genius,—the whole, perhaps, rather exuberant. The Abbé contends that he was ready to cry when the boy said to him, in a transport, 'Alas! that it might please my father to know me! I know that he thinks I have a bad heart: let him but try me‡!'"

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

† Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

‡ Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 26th 1770.

The whole history of the wrongs and misfortunes of Mirabeau's youth appear to us summed up in these few words, which, in the free course of an intimate correspondence, ingenuously depict the impressions made by the nephew on his uncle, whose prejudices were to be removed, whose solid reason and penetrating mind were to be satisfied, and whose soul, generous and kind, but nevertheless lofty and firm, was to be moved. Thus the unjust and fatal error is explained, which the Marquis, who was both obstinate and severe by nature, and was further instigated by dexterous insinuations, never ceased to commit by substituting a severity calculated to disgust, and excite a vehement temper, for persuasion that might have convinced, and kindness that might have softened.

But though the Marquis was warned by the observations and pressing exhortations of a brother most justly valued and beloved, did he ever appreciate his son Gabriel? Let us refer to his correspondence.

"I do not thank you for the reception you have given my son, because the right hand does not thank the left. Have a care lest your kindness of heart mislead you much faster than my letters can reach you, for you may soon learn that but a short time is requisite to get the effigy hissed, of which you wish to make a man. However, you may readily believe that all you have said about him has afforded me much pleasure.

Though a good heart may easily be deceived, it remains nevertheless certain, that whatever you are pleased with, will also give me satisfaction; and this is saying a great deal. His eager mind found itself quite at home with you, and was perfectly successful*. But be suspicious and on your guard against his gilded bill; it either shows or did show the vanity and presumption of the devil. In St. John's name, do not trust to his excuses, or he will mould you with his hand. He knows how to appear as tame as a pet Canary bird; his head is like a windmill and a firemill at the same time. His imperturbable impudence will make his fortune, when once he becomes steady; but I had rather not have a taste of it, and you will therefore not take it amiss if I proceed more cautiously. There is no necessity for his throwing off all restraint quite so soon; and, though I assume nothing from the pedantic rights of primogeniture, I never can approve of fathers and sons being hail fellow well met†."

In another place he writes—

"The kind Bailli has kept him several days, and the romance, with which this good-for-nothing fellow is perfumed from top to toe, has affected his uncle's head, which is good and strong nevertheless. 'He was

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 29th 1770.

absorbed by it:' this is his own expression. He is quite transported with the boy; the rascal has been at his clever tricks*. Were I to listen to my brother, I should give way to this usurping temper of my son's, not intentionally, but through confidence, and should be jolted by him, whilst it is my will that it should be quite the contrary †. Let him prevail with his uncle if he can, but he shall not prevail with me again so easily ‡."

This resolution was so firmly taken, that the Marquis, who thought of going to Provence, took measures beforehand that he might not meet his son.

" Let him then stay with you, if you and his superiors allow it; but be it well understood, that he is not to be there on my arrival, for I do not wish that the pleasure I shall derive from seeing you should be nothing but a parenthesis for me. Besides, the more he fears me, the less ought I to allow him to come near me, till I acquire the certainty that he is fully able to hold up his head §."

With such feelings in the Marquis, Mirabeau might have waited long enough for his father's

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 26th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated November 3rd17 70.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

pardon, and for an opportunity to render his high talents profitable to himself, notwithstanding his praiseworthy ambition to retrieve and to prosper. And in fact, he waited so long, that his hopes seemed destined never to be realised.

"At the request of his commander I applied for a captain's commission for him. M. de Choiseul offered me a company in the cavalry. I at once declined it, as I did not wish to plunge him into idleness, nor that he should again become a comrade in a new regiment *. He would have too high an opinion of himself. He would only have seen six months' service, and what kind of service †!"

The Marquis was, moreover, desirous of giving another direction to his son's studies.

"I have an objection to all reveries, literary or military. I wish you would repeat to him what I tell him, *omnis homo, nullus homo*, and that you would make him read the "Economics," and after that the two first years of the "Ephémérides," for I will send him the others. In them he will find the pure spirit and letter of ancient constitutions, which have always many branches, and the trunk of which is hidden in the thick underwood of subsequent laws ‡.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated April 12th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 14th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May

Mirabeau, however, wanted neither zeal, aptness, nor application, to pursue what he considered his military vocation.

22nd 1770. "The Ephémérides of the Citizen, or Chronicle of the National Intellect and Rational Library of Sciences," Paris, Lacombe, 1765 to 1772, 12mo., formed a compilation in which the association of economists issued their oracles. The Abbé Bandeau and the Marquis of Mirabeau were its founders, and also its principal editors until the year 1768; Dupont of Nemours continued it till 1772.

With regard to the "Ephémérides," our letters furnish us with a singular proof of the excessive haughtiness and pride, into which the Marquis of Mirabeau was led by the double impulse of party spirit and a character naturally lofty and inflexible.

"People are quite surprised at my intrepidity. I told you with what open audacity I firmly opposed all the measures already taken and avowed, to dedicate the 'Ephémérides' to the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XVI.) I have taken all the consequences on myself; and replied 'that he has only to become worthy of us, and that until then it would be a meanness.' At this very time I am going, in spite of the tremblers, to dedicate my 'Economics' to the Grand Duke of Tuscany."—*Unpublished letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 6th* 1769.

The Bailli, who was full as haughty and censorious as his brother, but against abuses, seldom against the royal authority, did not approve of this boast of the Marquis.

"You think you have related to me the history of the 'Ephémérides.' I know that you have made some allusions to it, but you have never given me a regular account: I therefore do not know what they treat of; but this I know, that I am not of your opinion, if you have had it in your power to present or to dedicate the 'Ephémérides' to the Dauphin, and that he sent to request it Do you think that a man can change his character? I believe I have never yet been considered mean, nor ever incurred the reproach of want of firmness: quite the reverse; but I think firmness should be exercised only with a view of avoiding evil.

" Trained in the prejudices of the service, burning with ambition, thirsting for fame, robust, fiery, indefati-

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Now, it is not doing evil to dedicate such a work to a man of that rank; and your refusal is rather obstinacy than firmness. What is your wish? Success for an undertaking of public utility. Such a mark of respect may accelerate it, but can never be injurious, whilst offended underlings may delay the publication. Who knows what such people may yet accomplish? Consider, moreover, that though France is pretty well despised at present, you have to do with no less a personage than *the eldest son of the church*, to which a mere nothing may restore its lustre; and that a dauphin may do more for your plan, than a hundred Grand Dukes of Tuscany.—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated March 18th* 1769.

We shall now merely transcribe the Marquis's reply.

" I have told you nearly all I had to say respecting the dedication of the 'Ephemerides.' The rest is only detail. The Doctor (Quesnay) had been hatching the idea for two years pest. But our frank and respectable Abbé (Bandeau) sent the whole business to the devil, saying he wished to be free. I think he was right. This year, or at the end of the last, I all at once heard, through the indiscretion of some young confidant, that the thing was ready for this year, and the epistle prepared and accepted. Our wisest friends told us that it would be like entering into some cabal, and exposing ourselves to another; that it would be deceiving the provinces which had reckoned upon their freedom, and be censuring and approving indiscriminately. I adhered to my opinion that princes should become worthy of us by deeds, or at least by principles openly professed. In advice of the kind it always becomes a question who is to fasten the morrice bell; and it must be acknowledged that I but too readily answer that call. I therefore took all the consequences upon myself, and candidly told them that I should withdraw from the 'Ephemerides' the moment they assumed the arms of the court. After many debates the question was dropped. The Duke of Saint Megrin (afterwards Duke of Vauguyon, son of the Duke of Vauguyon, governor to the grandchildren of Louis XV.) came,

gable, bold, and at the same time collected, as I have proved each time I have incurred danger; having been provided by nature with the power of taking a correct view of a thing at the first glance, I was justified in considering myself peculiarly qualified for a military life. All my ideas were consequently directed to it; and though my mind, eager for every kind of knowledge, aimed at all, five years of my life were almost entirely devoted to military studies. There is not a work on war, in any language, dead or living, which I have not read. I can show extracts from three hundred authors on war—extracts on which I have reflected, which I have compared and commented upon; also some writings by myself on all branches of the profession, from the most important objects of war down to the details of fortification, artillery, and even provisions *."

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however, to give me some explanation by way of apology. I plainly saw his intention, but maintained my point, telling him that M. de Fénélon had been ruined, by people convincing the king that he was instilling into his successor principles contrary to those of his own government. He did not leave me without a reply appealing to the difference of times and persons, adding, moreover that his father, who was to derive all the advantage as regarded the nation willingly sacrificed it to the safety of the work. This elicited many compliments in return, well knowing what court sacrifices are worth. But your letter is the first thing that has made me feel some regret concerning it, on account of the value I set upon your opinion."—*Unpublished Letter of the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 30th* 1769.

* Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, tom. iii. p. 21. This inclination subsequently yielded to the refusal of his father, to

In another place he says—

"What I am more especially destined to by nature, if I am not much mistaken, is to be a soldier, for it is in battle only that I am cool, calm, and lively, without impetuosity. I then feel that I become taller*."

These persevering efforts, their natural consequences to a mind of this cast, the application, and superior intelligence which the young officer had displayed in the

stronger preoccupations, and to the sway of principles which, at an early age, took possession of his mind. He says, in a letter to Sophie—

"For a long time past my ideas on this subject have been changed: 1st. I think that men, and consequently kings, can give only what they have,—the right of doing and commanding just actions, agreeably to order, and to the immutable laws of nature. A virtuous man must, therefore, be the sole judge of the justice of the war about to take place. This philosophy which is and shall be mine, is not compatible with a uniform. 2ndly. Regular troops, and standing armies have been, are, and will be good only for the establishment and maintenance of arbitrary power. Now, I do not belong to those mercenaries who, acknowledging him alone from whom they receive their pay, never recollect that this pay is supplied by the people; who take pride only in serving a single man, whilst they ought to consider it their sole duty to defend their country, who fly to execute the orders of their *master* (an infamous word, injurious to both the king and the nation), without reflecting that they are reduced to wear a livery rather than a uniform—without knowing that the most vile, the most odious, and the most despicable of avocations is that of being the satellite of a despot, and the gaoler of their brethren. The army, therefore, does not suit me."
—Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. iii. p. 22.

* Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to his sister, Madame du Saillant, dated September 11th, 1780, already quoted.

campaign of Corsica, the particular regard which his strict colonel had evinced towards him, the attachment shown him by Lieutenant-colonel Villereau, who had observed him still more closely—all these things were duly appreciated by the war minister, M. de Monteynard, who, on the 25th of January 1771, wrote to the Marquis of Mirabeau, as follows:

"I have just submitted to the king the representations which have been made respecting your son, who has the rank of second lieutenant in the legion of Lorraine. His Majesty has been pleased to lend a favourable ear to the account I gave him of your son's zeal, bravery, and application; and has granted him a captain's commission. He shall be attached in that capacity to the regiment of dragoons *."

"Fortunately," thus writes the Marquis, "his commission does not oblige him to any duty †;" and, in fact, whether it was because he had some repugnance for the profession of arms, which he had himself abandoned when twenty-eight years of age ‡, with the same rank of captain, or because he had other views for his son, the Marquis made no attempt to have Gabriel sent into actual service, though the young man was

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 26th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 3rd 1770.

‡ March 7th 1783.

eager to distinguish himself. To the pressing instances of his brother, who had been urged on by Gabriel, the Marquis replied—

"War? let him be so kind as to tell me where the armies of haddocks and herrings are? Does he think I have money to supply him with battles like Harlequin and Scaramouch?"

Only for a moment, he thought of getting him placed upon the staff.

"I am now endeavouring to obtain, that your nephew, *the hurricane*, may accompany Count du Muy, director-general, in his circuit, which comprises Flandres, the three bishoprics, and Alsace*. He has very politely refused thirty of the most notable persons in France, and consequently me among the rest†; but I do not yet give it up."

This plan, however, did not succeed. On the other hand, another project flattered for a moment the brave and ambitious Mirabeau.

"The Baron of Viominil," (*the rough colonel* of the legion of Lorraine, afterwards Marshal of France, who died in 1824,) "has promised me to take my son with him to Hungary, whither he is anxious to go, or in his

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 7th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated April 7th 1771.

circuit of inspection of the light troops *." The worst of it is, we are so highly esteemed, that the Emperor † will have nothing to do with Frenchmen ‡."

Mirabeau, however, was quite bent upon going upon actual service. As he despaired of being employed in the army, he had some idea of entering the navy, and his ardent spirit made him consider this branch in a great and new point of view.

" He told me, that as he was forced to wait for an indefinite time for employment in the army, he had made up his mind to enter the navy ||. He justly considers this branch the only one which of itself affords the best chance of making a man's talents available, and bringing him into notice. He is of opinion, that if any one can make his way in it, he is likely to do so more rapidly than in any other profession; and I own that he made me aware that even I, who am far from being his equal, had distinguished myself, which I was not likely to have done in a field trodden by lieutenant-generals, major-generals, colonels, majors, &c. ' For,'

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated May 5th 1771.

† Joseph II, that is to say, Maria-Thérèsa, his mother, who had retained the sovereign power.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 31st 1771.

|| Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 15th 1770.

said he, ' in the navy, the lieutenant of the watch is a sovereign, who is either accounted clever or the reverse on the morning after a stormy night *.' "

But the Marquis, from disgust at difficulties, and a mania for economy, persevered in his intention to divert Mirabeau from his military vocation, and " render him rural."

" I will hear of no romantic fantasies, or of voyages among the planets, or of useless amusements. It is labour and its success that constitute pleasure. Our five senses were given to us by nature to assist us in our labour: sight, feeling, smell, and taste, to distinguish objects; hearing, to communicate with each other. Pleasure, which is but a comma in the whole of this sentence, must be subservient to things of necessity. Dislike to labour is the general evil in France. Ever since the existence of urbanity and the arts, and iron-mongery, and commissions, and ribands, even the most distinguished for wisdom wish land was like stock, because they hate the trouble of repairs, improvement, and preservation. These things are, however, sufficient, and all that is necessary to occupy the time of a landholder, who should feel that he owes justice and assistance to men who are his brethren, and are not

* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 21st 1770.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd, 1770.

so many sponges which he is at liberty to squeeze in order that he may go to the opera, and sport gilded carriages in the streets of Paris."

"Do not fail to let him read the 'Economics,' and the 'Ephémérides.' The parcel for my son contains my new work, which is intended for you. It is a 'Catechism on Economy.' I apprize him how indispensable it is for him, if he wishes to bear my name, to be thoroughly acquainted with my science, otherwise he would constantly be a rallying point for all those people overcome by the prejudices that surround them, and his ignorance would either calumniate me, or render him despicable. Advise him to apply himself to that science, and make himself master of it. You cannot conceive how much it settles the heart, and invigorates the understanding *."

"Tell your nephew, *that backbone of a wolf*, who always addresses me off hand, and never with deference, as if he were a field-marshal, and with a familiarity of style at which, from an old and over-nice habit, I cannot help feeling annoyed, that the young hereditary prince of Baden has sent me a 'Summary on Political Economy;' and that he who inherits my name, if he be not an ass, must become a minister, or be capable of occupying my place in that branch of sci-

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

ence. Let him read the 'Economics,' and the 'Notice by the Editor,' which stands at the head of the 'Summary on the Elements:' it is the most elaborate work I ever wrote, though I was very ill at the time. Let him supply me with notices concerning Lower Limousin and Perigord, similar to that which he wrote on Corsica, with such additions, of course, as his subsequent improvement in the science will enable him to make.

"I again recommend to you to allay his smoke and military fire. His last letter, his navy scheme and his promises, were not at all to my liking, though I admit that there was nothing flighty nor disagreeable in the style, except the information that 'you were so kind as to accompany him in his walks.' You will see my answer to him: it is not pedantic; but it apprises him of the distance between persons of different ages *."

The science of political economy had but few charms for Mirabeau. He considered its theory narrow, false, systematic even to sophistry, pedantic, and sterile; but only ventured timidly to express some doubts to his father, who considered them so many acts of sacrilege. Away from the Marquis, Mirabeau expressed himself more openly, and his sayings were reported and exaggerated by domestic spies, by whom his father took care he should be constantly surrounded.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 4th 1770.

He nevertheless courageously undertook a tedious occupation, imposed upon him, with regard to the Mirabeau estate, on which he continued to reside with the Bailli. This noble old man had learned to appreciate Gabriel more and more, and the accounts which he gave of him, and his constant entreaties to have him recalled, if they did not excite the Marquis's anger, tended to awaken his suspicions.

" As it is probable that I shall enter my dotage at least two years sooner than you, I perceive that the great puppets of Peter Buffière have been cutting capers of longer duration than usual. There is but one thing which I did not like, namely, that he continues to say, ' people do not go the right way to work with him.' I say *continues*, for he has been saying so these fifteen years past, and nothing is more untrue. But be on your guard; a bottle which has been corked up with wire these twenty years must not be opened all at once, as the liquid would entirely run out *."

He again states elsewhere—

" We are obliged to let the young dogs go on, but the old ones are not to follow them; they stay behind, and with a single bark recal the whole pack to the right scent †. What occasion is there to let them all

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 4th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated June 9th 1770.

loose at the first signal? If we bring a man forward too prematurely, he comes to a market in which no one has either time or inclination to mind as it were his second edition, be it ever so well revised and corrected *."

But the Bailli persisted in praising his nephew, whom he was anxious to see restored to his brother's favour.

"Count Peter Buffière works like a galley-slave to acquire a correct knowledge of the Mirabeau estate. The rogue makes great progress in his labour. He is forming plans for a campaign against the Durance†, and writes volumes about them. He is a most fluent and ready writer; neither you nor I can come up to him. He tells me jestingly, that if I will keep him at Mirabeau, according to his ardent desire, he will be of the same service to my legs, which were formerly broken, that my spectacles are to my eyes. I am very well satisfied with him, with the exception that he has used in a week my stock of paper for eight months. His mind is quite fresh, full of vivacity and fire; but I see nothing but verdure, which promises to yield good fruit‡. I do not pretend to say that his mind is matured, but I maintain that it is very strong and powerful. I

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 7th 1770.

† The Durance, which passes through the estate of Mirabeau, continually ravages its banks by the irregular overflowings of its rapid and capricious current.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 30th 1770.

believe, for I dare not promise judgment,—I believe, *salvo jure paterno*, that the way to go to work with him is to address his reason. He soon gets into a passion, makes a noise, and sincerely repents of it afterwards. He listens to reason, and notes down all he hears and did not previously know. Besides, you have not compared notes together for some time past, for you say that you refuse to see him till you know him better. For his part, he entreats with clasped hands that his father will deign to know him *."

" I again return to Mr. Peter Buffière. I confess Poisson appeared to me a clever man. I am, however, afraid he has not left enough of what the Italians style *si fuogo* to the sallies of that lad's fiery mind, and that by restraining him he has as it were encumbered the furnace. I see in it an alarming exuberance. I am aware that you require proof, but I know likewise that our fears, like our hopes, are apt to lead us into error. I will not deny that I may be somewhat prepossessed in his favour, for I cannot well feel any thing like paternity except towards your children. This one appears to me very liable to become presumptuous, to which he is the more exposed, because must be quite impossible he should not feel some superiority of genius over nearly all of his age, and

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 1st 1770.

many who are older. He is not, like you, under the restraint of timidity, for I really think he has not any*. He is even, I believe, rather presumptuous; but we were perhaps even more so at his age, and may thank our bashfulness that it was not so much observed†."

"I will tell you that, on first seeing this boy, I thought I would let him have his own way, in order to know him better. I feel that I shall always be in time to assume a haughty tone. Whenever I found him too bombastic, I began to laugh, and corrected him coolly, as if I felt delighted whenever he was about to play the madman. I set him right without making him feel my authority, but by leading him to admit that the authority of an uncle must consist only in his superior judgment, his integrity of heart, and the purity of his morals and example. I even contrived to drop him a hint that he was upon trial; that his present conduct would decide his future welfare, whether it should be fortunate or the reverse; and that I would prove a useful and condescending friend to him, if I found that he possessed a good heart, and endeavoured to render himself worthy of you; but that I would also be the severest of his judges if he proved unworthy, and would

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the same to the same, dated August 21st 1770.

most assuredly, in such an extreme case, wash my hands of him without emotion or anger, and hear no more of him *."

"The love which I naturally bear to my kindred, and my own self-love, have perhaps beguiled me. I have still another reason for it, which you put me in mind of, by reproaching me with having said, thirty years ago, that you inherited of our mother a bias† towards pedantry; that it made us fail to make men, and made us tire those already made; and that it behoved us to despair less in regard to young people, because in them there is hardly a vice that is not a corrupted virtue ‡. I have formed this opinion because I have everywhere found young people reposing confidence in me; and I have had to do with fellows in the navy and at Malta whom nobody could manage, and whom I tamed by clear reasoning, seasoned with some pleasantry. Youth, which perceived that equanimity and not weakness prevented my becoming angry, loved me the more for it, and felt more inclined to believe me. All this may have made me the dupe of this young man, but I do not think so. If he does but

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Our readers are aware, that the character of the Marchioness of Mirabeau, mother of the Marquis and the Bailli, was very serious, and that her practices of religion were most austere.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 14th 1770.

acknowledge his errors, I prefer that he should always have tried to exercise his reason, than too easily have taken everything for granted. I hardly ever know worse characters than those who were so ready to acknowledge their faults whilst young; it indicates indifference, which, after all, is the only real moral evil *.

"This head of his is a mill for reflections and ideas, of which many are extremely new. You will find, as I do, that the furnace is hot, very hot; but, my dear brother, do not let us forget his age, and the saltpetre mixed up in our blood. It is expedient that he should have it in his power to become known, for as he perfectly understands reason, he listens to nothing else, and it becomes a dreadful task for him to submit to any other human restraints †."

A trifling, but somewhat curious fact, tends to corroborate this last observation. We possess a great many notes which Mirabeau made, as he was examining the estate on which he then momentarily resided. These sketches, quite rough and without order, were written in pencil, and on his knee, whilst he was in the fields. They were mostly thrown aside when he had extracted from them the substance of the calculations

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May 6th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 10th 1770.

and proposals he addressed to his father. We here literally transcribe one of these notes.

"I would line the whole with willows and poplars, which would produce a good clay, very inadequate for the Durance, but quite sufficient for our purpose. As for the oaks, it is said that they are marked *, and are to be applied to the construction of vessels. Gentlemen commissioners have no doubt thought proper to say so; but as for their saying, I have also heard it said that the Mirabeaus were not over fond of commissioners, and I consider it one of their virtues †."

After this strange and characteristic *aparte*, he continues his note without any interline, or break, in these terms:—

"There are here two breaches made by the torrent, but they are not very considerable, and we must get them repaired, &c."

When we attend to what followed, there is certainly something very remarkable in this observation which Mirabeau addressed to himself, in this ingenuous sally of a mind which so soon after waged war against arbitrary power wherever he discovered it. It was therefore, as the wise Bailli continually remarked, the elastic restraint of reason that should have been imposed upon this young man, and not the hard yoke of authority, which does not condescend to explanation.

* According to the provisions of the Ordinance of 1669.

† Autograph Copy of Agricultural Notes, No. 37.

" If I might give you advice on this point I could wish that you would show him, I will not say kindness, but some relaxation of severity *."

In the same letter, the Bailli recurs to this subject.

" I would not take a single step with regard to him except it met with your approbation; for I perceive that it is quite impossible to come to a right understanding. Even something done at my suggestion incurred your displeasure, because you thought it had originated with him. Finally, my dear brother, I beg of you, for your own sake, to have the goodness, if kind inquiries are made to you about him, to appear in some measure to have mitigated the severity you have used, for very good reasons; but if he puts an end to your motives, it appears to me that you should at least diminish their effect †. I could wish, and I shall willingly yield to a better opinion, that you would receive him as a man for whom I have become bail; further, that you would relax a little in your sternness, without however committing yourself, and suffer him to make advances to you, under a conviction that you are his friend, and take great interest in him ‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 21st 1770.

The legion of Lorraine, which had remained at Hières, at length arrived, and Mirabeau set out to join it at the Pont Saint Esprit. The Bailli bore him in mind; and was constantly endeavouring to gather evidence that might be favourable to him, which he from time to time transmitted to the Marquis with more zeal than success.

"All my servants who have leisure, and are fond of hunting, have followed him every where, and love him. Assuredly interest had nothing to do with their regard, for it was not by such means that Mr. Peter Buffière could curry favour. I have also seen his adjutant and his major. The latter is a man of German chapters. Both are knights of Saint Louis, *ergo*, no chickens, and both have a sedate appearance and military gravity, such as I have not even had a glimpse of before since my return to France. They said but little about him, because he was present, but I most carefully observed how they behaved to each other, and I perceived very well that they loved him, and had great esteem for him. Besides, the Abbé Castagny has been eaves-dropping, and accidentally found an opportunity of speaking to some officers of his regiment. Of course he made inquiries about the boy. 'Faith! Sir,' was their reply, 'that young fellow's blood is soon up, but then he is a noble-hearted creature, with wit enough for three hundred thousand devils. He is moreover extremely brave.' When the Baron of Langier

was here he embraced him, and was much gratified with the respect paid by the lad to his grey hairs *."

"Weigh well within yourself, whether it be not advisable that you should know him. Allow me to observe, that severity may do harm. I do not know whether I have not suffered myself to be beguiled by the affection he has evinced towards me; but it appears to me that at his age I was not near so good. You are also aware, that at that age thoughtlessness is not uncommon. Here he gains the affection of all who see him †."

"I still adhere to my opinion, with due deference to yours. I flatter myself, that when I do not meddle with him, you will feel that I act thus because I think it will be all the better hereafter. All these good people constantly say to me: 'Oh, my lord, you should have followed him, as we have done, to know how good he is.' Now, in our conversations, during which I laid him under no restraint, and even relaxed, that he might behave as if he were with an equal, I fancied, nay, I am sure, that I perceived in him a strong mind, though still young, but nothing denoting perverseness of heart. I believe that though he may droop his head, in deference to your authority,

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 18th 1770.

† The same.

and be silent for the same reason, he will for all that, only give his cordial assent to what is clear to his reason. And such reason, too, at twenty-one! I think I have already told you, that he gave me an opportunity of offering a reflection to his mind, which struck him immediately; for, whenever something occupies his attention, he advances his forehead, and no longer looks at any thing. He once observed, that his ideas had undergone a great change since his eighteenth year. I made it my text to assure him, that since they had changed so much in three years, a further lapse of four years would produce a still greater difference; and I confessed that mine had changed much since my fortieth year; an age at which a man may suppose his mind formed. 'Prudence,' said I to him, playfully, 'a virtue which may not yet form the bottom of your budget, requires that both sides of a question should be weighed before you decide *.'"

"In this you must recognise my old policy. I have long been of opinion, that the way to reform young people is to lead them imperceptibly to make reflections. Men are to be reformed only by their own thoughts. Add to this, that whenever he commits an error, I make him aware of it without pointing it out to him;

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 22nd 1770.

for I yet know of no better way to form a young man than by proving to him his miscalculations *."

"I shall moreover state, that I am daily told by different people, that they have heard good accounts of him. I shall, therefore, give you my opinion, which must always be subservient to yours. If you should hear something favourable of him, I wish you would hold out to him, that, as his uncle and others have informed you of his return to good, you shall feel great pleasure at recovering a lost son, and that it will only depend upon himself to recover a father whom he can make happy †."

" The brave Peter Buffière has left a reputation of kindness at Mirabeau, which has come to my ears from below. The peasants say, that he is kind and amiable to them all ‡."

" I am still studying Peter Buffière, and can answer for his goodness of heart; but he is certainly more giddy than a man usually is at his age. His boyishness forms a singular contrast with reflections, ideas, and writings, worthy of Locke. His is altogether a mind which requires much nurture, and, as far as I can see, promises to be more than good; for

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 18th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 22nd 1770.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 27th 1770.

I always call to mind that we were once no more than twenty-one, and that I was driven from all the points of the compass, though I appeared more demure than my nephew; but the devil was no loser by it. On the whole, I think you will have reason to be satisfied. He is very tender-hearted, and the moment you show him kindness you make him happy. He really has genius, and, like all persons of genius at that age, is inclined to presumption. I who had no genius, had the same bent, and you who had genius, were not free from it; but our bashfulness screened it from notice. I think him ambitious, and it must be confessed that he is of an age to be so. No gipsy ever cared less for sun, wind, rain, or hailstones. He is not unlike barley bread, his patron—every cupboard suits him. It strikes me that he is too fond of war, and yesterday he treated me to a good scene. When he had raked together all he could think of in favour of his ambitious views, I gave him a detail of the mere moral discomforts of the profession: it proved quite a check to him, and made him lengthen his visage sadly; I could see that he was turning every thing over in his mind. I should like to keep him, because I believe he has grown fond of me, and I profit by it, inasmuch as it completes my education. I think you will really consider it time that I were a well-educated young man. Finally, I persist in thinking, that it is expedient he should be near you: your presence would make him attentive to

his little imperfections; for hitherto I have found nothing bad in him, though I made him feel quite at his ease, that I might know him better *."

Whether the representations of the Bailli at length persuaded his brother, or the Marquis, who had to go to Limousin on family business, was in want of Gabriel, the prohibition that had been imposed upon him, not to approach his father, was withdrawn.

" Dear brother, Mr. Peter Buffiière is the bearer of this; he leaves to-day. You may, perhaps, not find him over economical; but then, I have laid but little stress upon that quality, for the way to ensure success, is not to insist too strongly upon a thing. Desire makes us see double, and, generally speaking, we succeed only in those things with regard to which we feel almost indifferent.

" Besides, as your son has a great deal of sense, and even what may be termed genius, you never need feel at a loss: and, with deference be it spoken, the subject is very cold for such a burning head. You are surely not to be told that it would be as ridiculous for a father to expect that the ideas of his children should be as sound as his own, as it would be to require that they should wear his shoes. Provided the heart be in its right place, people may differ in their inclinations. He is of an industrious disposition, and I have im-

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated July 5th 1770.

pressed upon him what we both of us thought of labour, telling him repeatedly that nothing settles life so well, which is otherwise lost in idleness and pleasure; that the mind is both supported and purified, as we feel we are getting rid of the grounds and the lees; and that one of the physical proofs of the soul's immortality, was found in the intellect and ardour of men still active in old age, who but half die, and only lose what proved an incumbrance. Besides, your son fears, esteems, and loves you. But I think I have discovered his way of thinking by being his friend. I am of opinion, that without losing your gravity and parental authority, you should evince some kindness and interest towards the young man. You will not only know him better, but your precepts will penetrate more easily; for though a son may know full well that he is not to contradict his father, he may yet not feel convinced. As I have been a son, I remember how it was with me. I received my education from those alone who showed friendship towards me; and whenever my father scolded me, I held my tongue, but my secret calculations went on *."

We perceive from a passage in this very letter, that though Mirabeau very naturally gives way to the prejudices of his station, even his father's authority

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 23rd 1770.

over him did not then deter him from expressing bold opinions, inveighing against arbitrary power, and regretting institutions, which, even though not liberal, acted as a counterpoise to despotism.

" If you endeavour to discover his sentiments, you will find that he in some measure thinks as I do; that is to say, with due deference, in a manner diametrically opposite to what is laid down by your civil and venal writers; and, amongst others, by M. Dupont, in the 'Ephémérides,' respecting the feudal system, which was the work of Charlemagne, and the boldest of his combinations *. For your son is not only well aware, that if the times required special contributions, there was no occasion for public extortion †; but, like myself, he

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* The Mirabeaus were all three of them great admirers of this monarch. The Marquis had written the following fine sentence upon him, which Mirabeau quoted in his "Treatise on Despotism," p. 118.

" Charlemagne was great among the great, and raised the age in which he lived to his own level."—*Letters on the Depravity of the Legal Order.*

Among other passages, for Mirabeau often recurs to this subject, this is what he himself states :—

" Charlemagne was the founder of the feudal order, which, prior to his time, was nothing better than a chaos of tumult and disorder. He was well acquainted with the spirit of his nation, and had a thorough knowledge of mankind. He felt that he should never be able to persuade them that a single man was at liberty to force his will upon them as law."— *Treatise on Despotism*, p. 195.

† " This feudal order, which has been so much reviled, laid it down as a constant maxim that nobody could ever be taxed otherwise than with his own consent. This principle contains the first

considers that state of society the only means that can prevent a monarchy from becoming an Oriental despotism, because like me he feels that the species of respect attached to some races, many of which cling together and form a sort of tribe, can alone raise a king to respect and keep him there. By a king, I mean a man whom the vilest portions of humanity have continually taught to consider himself omnipotent. I further believe with your son, that the respect and duties which a certain portion of the people owe to their lord, is even perceptible in regard to the king, and elevates him even while it brings him under restraint—a thing which has become highly necessary since royalty, in former times more military than civil, has outstepped its ancient limits *. Charles VII, and especially his son, were fully aware of it when they abolished the feudal system, with a view of monopolising a power of which the lords had formerly their share †. But let this suffice; the subject would afford

right and the first security of freedom."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 204.

* "In feudal government royalty was certainly not viewed in any other light than that of a military office, and not in that of a property. No country in Europe, whatever anarchy may have prevailed in it, however despotic and ferocious the tyrants who invaded it, was ever administered in those times of ignorance and barbarity, otherwise than by a legal and limited government."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 101.

† "Feudal anarchy was nothing but despotism distributed amongst many."—*Treatise on Despotism*, p. 126.

matter for a book, which I have neither power nor inclination to write. Therefore I will not say any thing more concerning that feudal system, which has been so highly censured by seditious plebeians, worse, against all kinds of authority, than either Clodius or Gracchus, except that it was only strong, and they have been pleased to style it barbarous, because France, which had the vices of strength, has now only those of weakness and cunning, and because the flock, which was formerly devoured by wolves, is now eaten up by lice. Besides, if in former times abuses arose out of this feudal system, and such was really the case, but is now no longer possible, it is nevertheless the only curb on despotism. It is worth while to hear your son speak on this matter; and I wish he would write what he utters, and here, for writers are mostly plebeians, taken from the proper occupation of their equals; they are a species of upstarts, dwelling chiefly in cities. This is more than sufficient to make us see things widely different from what they are *."

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* Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August 23rd 1770. We insert a less serious development of this apology of the feudal system, but have thought it better to separate it from the text.

" A glance at the provinces, if we enter into particulars, becomes alarming, on account of the tottering state of the old constitution. To see a set of rascals armed with pens succeed men armed with steel, is curious enough. I know all that is related of former acts of violence; but besides that tales are always somewhat exaggerated,

Mirabeau left Provence on the 25th of August, 1770, and on the 21st of September arrived at Aigueperse, in Limousin, after having had two falls, one from horseback, and another from his carriage.

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it remains a question whether the deceits of the inkhorn are not more to be feared and more injurious. A few kicks or a little cudgelling do not so much hurt a poor man's family, or himself, as do six folios of writing which devour him. Moreover, writing has taken both roads; and while a man is ruined by dashes of the pen, he is dragged to prison, forced, and his person is disposed of, whilst both he and his cattle are removed from his home in a much more arbitrary manner than was ever adopted by feudal lords, whose greatest tyranny proceeded from their hatred of that quilldriving, scribbling, and literary herd, who have often revenged themselves by calumnies on the superior order of men that kept them in their native obscurity. But as one should not always weep, though I am grieved at every thing I see, I heartily laughed at the narrative of a countryman who was naturally lively and lighthearted. This funny rogue told me that he had just had dealings with a sub-delegate, who had exempted him from a portion of average labour*. I asked him whether he had been satisfied.

" 'Yes, my lord,' he replied, 'I gave him four capons and made my request. I was put off till next day, and I began to be rather alarmed about my capons. Next morning I returned and obtained my exemption; and I saw my four capons strutting about in the sub-delegate's poultry-yard, *like four officers.*'

" The simile made me laugh, and brought back to my recollection the time when it was customary, in stating that a great personage had arrived, or had done any thing, to designate him as *an officer*; now-a-days it is a *clerk*, or a president, a farmer of the public revenue, or some other individual of the same stamp!"—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated June 16th* 1759.

* Labour due from the peasant to the lord.—Tr.

" Dear brother, my son alighted yesterday morning. Accidents were invented for the impatient. Beyond Roanne a post horse broke its leg under him, and as he was approaching, gave him a kick in a place which you may easily imagine. It became necessary to bleed him, and he was obliged to stop, and had then to proceed to Clermont by the coach. He was badly cured by his poultices, when he determined to travel post, and pushing on at too great a rate, had another fall, a fit of vomiting, and finally sent from Saint Léonard to me for assistance. You know that thumps are as necessary to exuberance as generous diet is to tenuity *."

" I have received him with kindness, and even with tenderness. I have made him acquainted with persons and things, warning him that I should examine him myself and by others, diminishing or increasing his trials, as I might deem it more or less prudent so to do— all with a view of ascertaining whether he can be master of himself, an indispensable preliminary, in order that we may not lose everything before we let him loose; and that if I should happen to see him in danger, or in a bad posture, I might bid him go and await maturity in a less dangerous country. I warned him likewise that it was time he should diminish those veins of his, swollen by an easy life and good living;

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

that sufficient, and even too much time had already been lost, considering the triple career he was to run, if he did not wish to degenerate in the extreme *."

"From that time he has felt himself quite at ease, for he has much of our candour, vulgarly termed indiscretion. Though his grotesque appearance often assuaged my eloquence, I have seriously lectured him pretty well on everything, sometimes with mild, sometimes with severe earnestness. I perceive that it makes my man lengthen his nose, fix his eyes, or turn his head abruptly, which are signs, the one of reflection and emotion of his mental faculty, the other of surprise and of his being disarmed. I make them succeed each other, to break in the mouth of this unruly animal †."

"I am, however, on my guard, recollecting how elasticity of mind can conceal a barren soil. But after due reflection we must give him plenty of exercise, otherwise what the devil are we to do with such intellectual and sanguine exuberance? The Empress of Russia is the only woman I know for whom this man would be a proper husband ‡."

The Bailli was quite delighted to perceive, in his brother's letters, some indications of a return of kindness.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

† The same.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 5th 1770.

" Continue to bestow your affection on Count *Squall*, whom you justly denominate *rudis indigestaque moles*; it is right he should find you gracious, and he really deserves it. But is he not two different individuals at the same time? When he happens to be disposed to talk reason, Cicero was comparatively but a fool to him; but then he is, on the other hand, sometimes more childish than befits his years *."

This is the first token of kindness which Mirabeau obtained from his father, and yet what a token! Six months previously, when the Bailli's repeated assurances and persevering solicitations had begun to prevail for a time over inveterate dislike and unremitting instigations, the Marquis had written thus to his brother:—

" If you continue to be, and persist in being satisfied with him, I shall enable you to make him a great present. You may obtain for him leave to assume our name †."

On the 21st of September following he writes—

" All of them (his son-in-law, the Marquis du Saillant, then Count, the Marchioness du Saillant, Mirabeau's sister, and their family) have asked me to grant him our name, and I have consented. This is telling you, in

* Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated September 18th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 29th 1770.

other words, that I am growing tame *. It is in fact possible that a correct understanding, a good heart, and a strong mind, really struggle under that rude and rough exterior; but all this must be kneaded, regulated, and macerated. We shall finally be able to *unhussar* him, when he has seen something more of the world, and convinced himself, that, reckoning from Alcibiades down to his father and uncle, it is a merit in a man of some superiority, to be able to assume any character required at the time, and to divest himself of it when there is no longer occasion for it. It may be expedient for a soldier to consider himself as belonging to a principal and almost exclusive order, not unlike the capuchin friars; but a man is but a lout if he does not know that he should drawl only in a cloister †."

No sooner had Mirabeau arrived, than he strove to clear up some difficult points.

"I show him that both business and difficulties diminish when we boldly approach them. Finally, it would be difficult to see a rogue with more talent and action. He would floor the very devil; and at the extremity of the desert world which he inhabits, he has already found two or three outlets ‡."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated October 8th 1770.

† Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 8th 1770.

‡ The same.

" I therefore avail myself of the aid of your nephew *the hurricane*, to whom my servant Luce, a kind of Bertholde*, jestingly observed the other day, 'Confess, Count, that a body is very unfortunate that has to carry such a head.' However expedient it may be that he should have plenty to do, and however numerous his occupations, which swallow hours as if they were lozenges, still I am astonished and frightened at the quantity of work he undertakes. He should be a rural man, that he may not be ruined; he should become a public man, that he may not be unworthy of his lineage; he should be a man of the world, considering his rank and fortune; he should be a man of the closet, on account of his taste and talents. Add to this that he requires forced and almost unremitting

* To justify the more what we have stated concerning the singular mixture of goodnature, haughtiness, and severity which distinguished the Marquis of Mirabeau's character, we give an extract from another letter in which the same servant is mentioned.

"My footman Luce, for whom Sancho would not have been a match, a fellow amusing with his nonsense, even to proverbs, by degrees makes bold to say to me at table, in full company: 'You have had quite enough, or you may still eat this.' When I asked him for a coachman the other day—'Do you know,' he replied, 'that it is *almost* as rare to find an honest man among servants as it is among masters?' He said to me, yesterday—'Sir! your eyes are sinking in your head. By dint of thinking, you will lose that faculty altogether, and your head will be turned!'"—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 23rd 1770.*

exercise, otherwise he is threatened with gravel *, and is much too young not to be overwhelmed by this complaint. Above all things, we must let this green fruit ripen †."

Circumstances were however calculated to *ripen* the young Count. Being sent for by his father, he arrived just at the death of his maternal grandmother, the Marchioness of Vassan ‡, and it was that event which brought the Marquis to Limousin. The Marchioness of Mirabeau was likewise there, animated by the expectation of a rich inheritance, soured by long exile, and carried away by the violence of her temper. Whatever were her domestic errors, which, though perhaps exaggerated, were nevertheless true, and were, we must admit, counterbalanced by those of her husband, she wanted to get possession of his fortune, and deprive him of liberty. She signified her intention to go to law

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* Seven years after, whilst incarcerated in the Donjon of Vincennes, and suffering the most excruciating pain from an attack of gravel, to which he had a natural predisposition, Mirabeau requested to have medical aid. The Marquis had formerly been well aware of his son's having this complaint, but his domestic enemies persuaded him that it was now only assumed; and the harsh father, rejecting his own recollections, allowed himself to be deceived by this cruel calumny.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 25th 1770.

‡ Anne-Theresa de Ferrière of Sauvebœuf, who died November 4th 1770, widow of Charles, Marquis of Vassan, who died suddenly August 17th 1756.

if it were necessary, and this led to that long and deplorable litigation with which the tribunals resounded during more than fifteen years, and to which we shall never refer but with extreme reserve, and only when absolutely required by our subject.

This same circumstance prepared for Mirabeau, within a short period, serious trouble, great danger, and even proved the unavoidable cause of cruel wrongs. There is really no worse position than that of a son placed between parents openly at variance *, who, blinded by their passion, display towards each other the fiercest hatred in his presence, at the risk of annihilating filial respect in the mind and heart of a youth without experience. To gain an adherent in their own child, they use their natural ascendency over a confidant both wavering and afflicted †, a judge who is instituted

* The Marquis of Mirabeau himself acknowledged the reality of this source of domestic trouble, without deducing fromit motives of indulgence towards his children.

" I have often told myself that the worst inconvenience arising from the disagreement of a father and mother, is the dispersion of their children, the state of abandonment into which they fall, their embarrassment in conciliating their duties, and the prejudices of the parents against resemblances."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Lefranc of Pompignan, dated September 5th* 1778.

† The reader may judge of it by the following passage, in a letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau.

" Your nephew has a fine beginning there in the thorns of domestic life. The first day he saw his mother he returned quite ill, from the violence he had done his feelings. Judge how he must

by force to pronounce between parties to whom he owes equal respect and equal tenderness, and can neither withdraw himself from such painful arbitration, nor discharge its duties profitably without inconvenience and danger.

Thus, however, was Mirabeau circumstanced; and we shall afterwards show that he did not succeed in surmounting its difficulties, which would have been insuperable to any other person, but were much more dangerous to a character like his, which, from injustice of every description and absurd severity, would naturally be led to league with persecuted weakness against oppressive violence. We shall but too soon come to this distressing episode. We must previously notice

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have felt when we had to take him again to meet her at the Chateau du Saillant, when he saw her once more led away by her ungovernable passion, and became a witness of her follies. This young man, who is not so much accustomed to storms as I am, who sees, or thinks he sees, the devil let loose, gives himself up for lost."—*—Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 13th* 1770.

Among a thousand written invectives, we shall extract only a single one, which we take almost at random.

" So long as the mother's eternity lasted, I put up with everything, because I always willingly resigned myself to the will of Providence. But now Madame de Vassan is dead, her daughter is become quite mad, and, instead of domestic happiness, compared to which every paradise of vanity is but as purgatory, she will never fix her residence but in marauding quarters."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 20th* 1770.

the labours of rural administration to which Mirabeau applied himself whilst in Limousin.

"A terrible dearth has come upon our unhappy country. The Count proposed that I should buy eighty or a hundred quintals of rice, and give those poor people employment. He has his orders, and commences like a man. He works with them, and dines with them at the head of their huge table, partakes of the same food, inspires them with courage, and keeps up their spirits*."

"When our business is over, and is, moreover, properly accomplished, my young spark returns, *nihil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum.* If nobody has any thing to contest with us in Provence, this is an inheritance to be laid hold of: for, thanks to the three-storied mad-houses which I have to govern, this Limousine fortune, were I not to attend to it, would be exposed to all winds, and quite lost. The rogue has stood upon the point of honour. He has but just now established a court of arbitration †, a thing I was nigh

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated November 18th 1770.

† This was a kind of council of arbitration, to which the inhabitants of the estate submitted their differences, and these were adjusted without delay and without costs. On this occasion the Bailli wrote to the Marquis—

"The institution of your arbitrators in Limousin is excellent. I have long since thought that every other mode of administering justice was defective, and liable to make a monarchy degenerate first into despotism, and finally into anarchy. I do not know whether it will

thinking impossible. It has shown his flexibility, ingenuity, candour, and activity. He has employed the priests, and reconciled every body. Only conceive that among the elect of the parish there are some gentlemen in very good circumstances. In all the matters of litigation which are very voluminous, and to which there is, as it were, no end, that have only been commenced this summer, there are inextricable balancing of accounts, &c. In one word, *he is the demon of impossibilities.* He was already on horseback by four in the morning, on the first of January, in these bogs and mountains, and his heart rejoiced as he received blessings. He exclaimed, 'I shall have a good year of it.' I knew very well that his was a mind which required occupation, and something more than exercise: the rogue, I assure you, does things to a good purpose*."

"Hitherto my son has acquitted himself very well at Aigueperse, besides settling the principal business for which I sent him thither. He is very badly off for food, a dispensation that must necessarily be suffered by him who wishes to become a man of merit. If this continues he will not have lost his time there†. I

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please those societies which have assumed the guardianship of the state."—*Unpublished letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 29th 1770.*

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 11th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated January 20th 1771.

consider him at present entitled to my confidence; and as this method is most congenial with my disposition, I cautioned him accordingly. There is, therefore, nothing in my accounts of any description that now I wish to conceal from him*."

When the Marquis was about to leave Limousin, he was undecided whether he should take with him his son who had thus triumphantly stood the test of this first trial. His first intention was negative; for he wrote some months before—

"I have sworn that none of my sons should see Paris before their twenty-fifth year, on account of the disorder which it unavoidably produces, and which is the first step to the gallows*."

By and by he writes to his brother—

"I must return to Paris in November, but I must previously make up my mind as to my son's winter quarters. Now, I shall be at a loss what to do with

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated January 12th 1770. The proof of that satisfaction and confidence was published at the time, as we are apprised by Mirabeau himself (Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 190.) in the "Ephemerides of the Citizen," a journal on political economy, under the direction, as we before stated, of the Marquis of Mirabeau. The account of one of his son's operations fills pages 110 to 194, vol. iii., Paris, Lacombe, 1771. We have borrowed from the "Ephemerides" some passages which appear interesting, and inserted them in the appendix to the present volume.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated May 22nd 1770.

him, for he is fit neither to be shown nor trusted at an age so liable to warping, and in a place like Paris, which corrupts good youths, and despatches bad ones. The effeminate life of that city will moreover disagree with his health*."

The Marquis, on a sudden, adopted a contrary resolution, and, on leaving, allowed his son, who was shortly to follow him, to undertake a journey which the young Count was much bent upon.

"From what you will have perceived in my reflections on my son's exuberance, his decisive tone, his vivacity, and his peremptory notions, you will now be surprised to learn that I have promised him to let him come to Paris. But, first, my friends persecute me, and tell me that he will only be considered among the living when they see him, and that he will be deemed in disgrace so long as they do not. Secondly, though I feel that it is a matter personal to myself alone, I cannot help listening to them. Nevertheless I see all this as the root feels the trembling of the leaves; and I say to myself, that if I were to wait till time had smoothed him, his hair might become grey. Thirdly, I consider further, that if there is a time calculated to impress him with the necessity of living constantly on his guard, and of speaking only after due reflection, it must be this in which the spirit of subordination falls

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 30th 1770.

every where to pieces, in which law protects rogues as wool does worms, in which the pandemonium of hatred, intrigue, and cabal, which neither he nor his are able to repel or control, has been let loose. Fourthly, it is not be supposed that a young man of courage and sense will fall into the snare that strips the silly country birds of their feathers*."

Mirabeau lost no time in availing himself of the permission.

"Your brother-in-law arrived the day before yesterday (February 14th) from Limoges, in three days, through a terrible hoar frost, after many a fall and contusion, and at a time when he was least expected †."

Let us add that this once he was well received, as appears from these words, in a letter to his sister: "I have appeared here:—mind, I say appeared, for they did not expect me yet! I am loaded with kindness; and I perceive that this time his heart has been quite regained ‡."

"It was even yesterday," continues the Marquis, "that I took him to the Chevalier Vioménil, to the Marquis of Lambert, and to Sigrais §."

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated December 28th 1770.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated February 16th 1771.

‡ Unpublished Letter from Mirabeau to the Countess du Saillant, dated February 16th 1771.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, of the same date.

"We thought him morose, and he was actually so. I am afraid that he is but too much inclined to take impressions from the people he may live with, and for this reason I shall keep him a great deal with you or myself. Fortunately his commission * does not subject him to any duty †."

"I have already presented him to Marshal Broglie, according to his wish. He will be presented every where at Versailles. The excellent Laqueille ‡ told me that he must be introduced to the Prince of Condé, because all the young military nobles were to be found there. *Bene sit;* but if this be the case, he will be known to every body §.

"He is now regularly launched into the world, and God knows how he acquits himself. Be assured that he will clear me from the suspicion that I wanted to make a philosopher of him, the more so, because he is as insinuating as I have been austere||."

"Your nephew has been fortunate in his visits at Versailles ¶. He is to call to-day on the Duke of Orleans,

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* Of Captain of Dragoons.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 18th 1771.

‡ The Marquis of Laqueille, a colonel in the army, and a relative, friend, and country neighbour of the family.

§ Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated February 18th 1771.

|| The same.

¶ The sister of Louis XVI, Madame Elisabeth, then six years old, asked Mirabeau whether he had been *inoculated*. This singular

and the prince of Condé. He is to be at their dinners, their suppers, and to visit the other princes, &c. Society has changed since our time; people seek each other and congregate. He behaves properly; his demeanour is respectful, not mean—easy, but not familiar. He has been prepossessed in favour of hunting, carriages, suppers, &c. I shall let him follow that course, which is expensive at first; but then it is a fashionable occupation which wise people know how to turn to good account, and which the rogue will immediately be up to*.

"Your nephew is three days in the week at Versailles; though he does not usurp any thing, he attains every thing, and is every where well received†. But as he is a man who must be kept in constant activity, it is better he should exert himself there than here‡. All are like relatives to him: the Guémenées, the Carignans, the Noailles, and I do not know how many more, are quite taken with him. He even astonishes the old stagers at Versailles. They think him as playful as a young pointer dog. Madame de Durfort says

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and ingenuous question caused great laughter at Court.—*Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes*, vol. ii. p. 413.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 5th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 20th 1771.

‡ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to Count du Saillant, dated March 9th 1771.

that he would upset the dignity of any court; but they all think he has more wit than any of them, which is certainly not very judicious on his part. It is by no means my intention that he should live there, and, like so many others, exercise the trade of drawing and purloining some substance from the king, patrolling in the dirty ways of intrigue, and skating on the ice of favour; but to attain my object, it is necessary that he should see what is going on. And besides, should I even be asked why I, who never had a mind to nestle at Versailles, permit him to go thither whilst he is still so young, my answer is, that he is made of different materials from myself, who am like a wild bird that has built its nest between four turrets; that he will there only play the fool in what people are pleased to consider good society; that so long as he was awkward I hid him, but the moment I find him presentable he only enjoys his right; that, as during five centuries people have been able to put up with the Mirabeaus, who were never made like other people, they would also have patience with this one, who I promise them shall not lower the name *."

This truth, so loudly acknowledged by the Marquis himself, ought to have engaged him to look out for opportunities of constant employment for that turbulent activity which a complete want of something to do, and

* Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated March 20th 1771.

contagious example, were likely to lead astray. We have stated, however, that he by no means cared to fix his son in the military service; the only reason he alleges for it is as follows:

"This antiquated profession, for which he has extraordinary talents, is grown as much out of fashion as tournaments*."

On the other hand, a proposal made by the Bailli, who wished him to try a diplomatical career †, was not accepted. Some months passed, of which we have but few particulars, for, as the family were staying altogether at the Castle of Bignon, the course of their epistolary correspondence is in some measure broken. Nevertheless, some letters to absent friends, such as the Duke of Nivernois, and the Countess of Rochefort, succinctly indicate the versatility of the Marquis's impressions and opinions with regard to the young Count.

Whilst the Marquis was in a state of convalescence from an illness attended with some danger, a kind of fête was given to him, conceived and directed by his son.

"Providence has played me a trick, by making me the father of a chicken, which was at first and for some time a bird of prey, but has now become a tame duck in the poultry yard; which dabbles, jabbers,

* Letter from the same to the same, dated June 7th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 18th 1770, and February 11th 1771.

quacks, and swims after flies. The animal has set up for a contriver of festivities. This very day he conducted me to high mass, amid salutes of musketry, to hear a 'Te Deum;' then we had fireworks, and illuminations. At this moment that I am writing to you, the whole parish is dining without forks, in the court-yard. Take notice, that they are not rude and poor peasants, for my parish has not its equal in the whole country. Assuredly, I find, *in petto*, the bait rather gross; but it proves a good disposition. I therefore request that you would be so kind as to take this good-natured fellow under your protection, on your return, not because I spoil him, but because he does just what he thinks proper, and takes advantage of my facility *."

But the tone of the correspondence soon takes another turn. Mirabeau returned to Paris, and his father wrote respecting him—

"At the rate your nephew, *the hurricane*, goes on, who I believe will soon have done with the court and the city, it may easily happen that by the time his head is become mature, his tail may have stuck in strips to the bush †. On the other hand, the constant stretch of mind which he occasions, and which is felt the more by

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 28th 1771.

† Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated July 10th 1771.

being concealed, at length really becomes a nuisance. Setting aside his peculiar unruliness, and that slaughter of ideas which makes him see by flashes of lightning and pursue nothing personal to himself, were you to witness how things go on here, in what a fermentation people's minds are, and how materials have of necessity and long since been collected to bring matters to extremities every where, you would be of opinion that a person given to reflection had plenty to do to steer his own course, and that to undertake the task of moderator to a wild fellow like my son would be no sinecure *."

" He undertakes every thing, and perseveres in nothing. I have weaned him from Versailles, and thrust him into libraries, in which he passes whole days with Gebelin †, and M. de Pompignan ‡, by turns. He works and plays the bookworm, like a mad devil as he is, and after his old fashion §."

" The presence of this young man is laborious and fatiguing. He is headstrong, peremptory, and has a

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* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated July 7th 1771.

† Count de Gebelin, author of " The Primitive World," &c., one of the supporters of political economy.

‡ Lefranc of Pompignan, author of " Dido," " Sacred Poetry," &c. We shall show in the sequel of our narrative that Lefranc of Pompignan was among the small number of persons who had some influence over the Marquis of Mirabeau.

§ Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 11th 1771.

confusion of ideas that will never be cleared, because his memory has retained only sketches, and is of a piece with the rest. He sticks at nothing, and does not even exactly know his own name; and as he is never to acquire any correct notion, he will always be positive, and become intolerable, take my word for it. Nevertheless, he is clear-sighted and possessed of great talents at bottom, though I am afraid he will never grow steady whilst he lives *."

We purposely omit some details not worth mentioning. Mirabeau left Paris on the 14th of June 1771 † for Limousin, where he was entirely left to himself in the pursuit of rural labours, which prove that his father's confidence was not withdrawn. But our documents show that this seclusion was a snare artfully laid by the ingenious hatred of Madame du Pailly. Nevertheless, this laborious and difficult adjustment in which Mirabeau was engaged, again gained him praises, of which, his father was at no time very prodigal towards him. He proposed to the Marquis to clear a large tract of ground; and this project, at first listened to ‡, was ultimately rejected. He returned

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis of Laqueille, dated June 8th 1771.

† Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Duke of Nivernois, dated June 15th 1771.

‡ He proposed to farm lands in Limousin, of which he would have paid the rent to his father. We shall just state what he himself says on the subject.

to Bignon, November 24th 1771*, and met with the same obstructions, the same mistrust, the same persecutions. He speaks of the bickerings which people occasioned between him and his father, during the winter he spent at Paris, and of which strangers† gave him warning. The Marquis complains of his "eldest son, a scribbler, a spendthrift, who daily emancipates himself; whose boyhood was so monstrous, his youth so unruly, a worthy exordium of his beautiful life; whose young manhood consists in indiscretion, indecency, and clothed up garrulity, and is, moreover, so presumptuous, so turbulent, and at the same time so loose, that an attempt to save him from the dangers of this third stage of life, and from those of his own dis-

"I entered into some details respecting a proposal which you listened to, when I wrote to you about it, and recommended to my further consideration. You then refrained from giving me a decisive answer. I pressed you for one, and you gave me a positive denial." —*Original Letters from Vincennes*, vol. i. p. 298.

This is what his father first said to him.

"My son has, no doubt, apprised you of the great affair he proposed to me, and to which I believe I shall accede. In the first place, he cannot but be the better for it in every respect: it will enable him to obtain a thorough knowledge of his real calling, and accustom him to conform to it at an age of quick perception and plastic talents. It is, moreover, the only resource left in our days, and it will certainly not be through any fault of mine if this fiery fellow is not trained to it."—*Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Marquis du Saillant, dated August 31st 1771.*

* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 16th 1771.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 297.

position, would amply fatigue and dishearten twenty mentors instead of one *."

Though the Marquis felt quite persuaded that there was no authority but his that could check the ardent disposition of his son, he nevertheless, instead of keeping the latter near him, sent him to Mirabeau, to endeavour to retrieve and keep in order turbulent communities, whose resistance, at first inert, but soon after hostile, disconcerted the Marquis's agents. The mission with which the young Count was charged was difficult, and, considering his character, even dangerous, as he himself states in one of his letters †. He left Paris on the 2nd of December 1771.

We shall not enter into any particulars concerning this journey, though he gives an account of it in letters now before us. He does not spare himself, whilst confessing some follies to which he subsequently alluded in a passage already published ‡; but he further relates an incident, in other respects quite simple, in so humorous a manner, that we cannot refrain from giving it in a note §, just as we might be seduced into some sprightly conversation.

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* Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated November 16th 1771.

† Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 298.

‡ The same, vol. i. p. 299.

§ " *Fracti bello satisque repulsi ductores Danaum.* Here you have, my dear uncle, a fine beginning of pure Latin, which means that I am harassed with fatigue, having slept for this week past

The moment Mirabeau arrived, he attended to the business intrusted to him, and sent for the syndics of

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scarcely more than a sentinel on duty, and having taken the precaution of sounding, with the wheels of my chaise, all the ruts between Paris and Marseilles. These ruts were, and I believe still continue to be, very deep and numerous. Further, I had my axle-tree broken between Mulseau, Romané, Chambertin, and Beaune. What a fine geographical situation, had I been addicted to drunkenness! But as I had not there the benefit of your compass, you will excuse my not telling you precisely the several points indicating the situation of the vineyards. Moreover, this accident happened to me at five in the evening, my servant having already set off before me. At first only loose snow fell, which fortunately hardened afterwards. The neighbourhood of Beaune made me think that I should find some genius in its inhabitants. I stood in need of good advice, for the devil first prompted me to swear; but I soon lost that inclination, and yielded in preference to the temptation of laughing when I saw a holy priest pass, muffled up close to the chin, his pious countenance pelted by the snow, which made him cut so odd a figure that it drove away the tempting spirit which disposed me to curse. This holy man, seeing that my chaise lay on one side, and one of its wheels at some distance, asked me whether anything had happened to me. I replied, that I myself felt no other inconvenience than the snow. 'Oh!' said he ingenuously, 'your chaise then is broken.' I requested him to tell me sincerely whether he had not before had some idea that this was the case. 'Oh!' said he, 'I almost feared as much.' I admired this person's sagacity, and begged he would accelerate his speed, if his horse would give him leave, which looked rather queer at the snow that came right against its nose, and to give notice on his arrival at Chaigny of the predicament I was in. He assured me that he would make it known to the post mistress, who was his cousin; that she was a most amiable woman, married these three years to one of the most respectable men in the place, nephew of the *procureur du roi* of a country he named to me, but which is not to be found in any of your maritime charts. As the holy man was

the communities. We here insert what was written on the subject by the reverend Abbé Castagny, of whom we have already spoken, when relating Mirabeau's stay at the castle, just after his return from his expedition to Corsica.

"I accompanied your son; he had convened these

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continuing to sound his fair cousin's praises, the devil, who had only retired to a short distance through respect for his priestly habit, tempted me to entreat him to propose me to his relative as the representative of her absent husband; but by some miracle I resisted the temptation. Finally, after he had given me a complete account of all particulars of himself, his cousin, her husband, and ever so many people more, he spurred his sagacious steed, and made it groan. I forgot to tell you that I had commenced by sending forward my postilion to Mulseau, the road to which he knew, for he told me that he was in the habit of taking his bottle there every day. This was no boast on his part, for I verily believe he was in the habit of drinking more, and I was even afraid that he might be tempted to try whether the wine had not become spoiled during his absence. Fear cures nothing:—when he left me he seemed but a little the worse for liquor, but unfortunately, when he returned, which happened pretty late, he was quite drunk. I was on the look out—several Beaunese passed; all asked if anything had happened to me. I replied to one of them, that I was trying an experiment, having been sent from Paris to see whether a chaise would go with only one wheel; that mine had come so far, but I was going to write to my employers that two deserved the preference. At this moment my man knocked his shin against the other wheel, put his hand to the bruised part, swore, as I had wished to do, and perhaps did, and then with a smile said, 'Law, sir! there is the other wheel!'—'The devil there is!' said I, coolly, 'I never perceived it before.' Another, having examined it a long while, and with a very knowing look, exclaimed, 'Faith, Sir! your axle-tree is broken.'"—*Unpublished letter from Mirabeau to the Bailli, dated December* 12*th* 1771.

republicans, but he only partly succeeded in bringing them together. Having assembled those who had arrived, he addressed them with a force, a kindness, and a dignity that made me shed tears; and he said such affecting things to them, as must have made them yield, if they had not been wicked in the extreme. 'Now,' said he, 'you know my father; he is renowned all over Europe for his sense of honour, his probity and his benevolence; and I should be unworthy to be his son were I to swerve from the example he has set me.' He had just made some impression on the people, when Boyer destroyed it all by his insolence, which tended to sedition, and this he would surely have excited, but for the Count's patience and calmness, which, from the knowledge I had of his character, surprised me the more, because even I, who am old and a priest, hardly felt myself equal to the task*."

We shall not enter into particulars respecting the long and useless exertions made by Mirabeau to obey his father; nor respecting the scenes in which the Procurator Boyer rendered himself conspicuous†; for they are devoid of interest, and would make us deviate from our plan. Our object is to embrace the particulars

* Unpublished Letter from the Abbé Castagny to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated December 2nd 1772.

† This is mentioned in the Original Letters from Vincennes, vol. i. p. 300.

which delineate Mirabeau's character, and we again recognise him in the following passage:—

"I found nothing but what was right in his conduct here. He is hasty, but he has a good heart; he wants to upset everything, but a single word disarms him, and he gains everybody's affection. I have taken the liberty of advising him how to behave at Aix. This step must decide his prospects. If he is relished, his fortune is made. To arrive at this point, I tell him, that he should be moderate, speak little, let other people speak, criticise no one, and not wish to appear cleverer than others; that he should be respectful towards men, play but seldom, and make much of the Intendant, M. Albertas *, of the Archbishop, and of some others whom I have named to him. He listens to me. I hope that when you have given him your commands, he will execute them. Be persuaded that I am not led by enthusiasm to say or do more than is correct; for if I saw anything in his conduct that might be detrimental to him, I would secretly warn you of it, as in duty bound †."

We have now reached a period when a great family event was preparing.

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* One may perceive by the Letters from the Donjon of Vincennes, vol. i. pp. 326—334, that Mirabeau greatly neglected this advice, and that it injured him materially.

† Letter from the Abbé de Castagny, dated January 2nd 1772.

"That incrustated phiz of his, with all its graces natural and acquired, which I had sent into Provence to frighten insolent vassals, has there found means of being accepted, desired, and sought after in marriage*."

Let us here stop a moment and take a retrospective glance before we relate that event which ought to have had a happy influence over Mirabeau's fate, but which only varied its complications and misfortunes.

In the preceding narrative, we have followed a plan little calculated to gratify the author's self-love; but it characterises the biographer's object, and proves his good faith to be quite independent of personal pretensions.

Animated by the sole desire of substituting for the false portraits which have been drawn of Mirabeau, a moral description of the man, the truth of which would be incontestible, we have borrowed from his natural judges, those facts which display his character. We may even make bold to say to his contemporary and domestic adversaries, that there is not a single fact, not an inference nor a justification drawn from his historians, friends or enemies; nor from the direct or indirect defence which he has made in his confidential or public writings, published either by himself or after his death,—a defence which would,

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis of Mirabeau to the Countess of Rochefort, dated May 1st 1772.

however, have brought us to the mark we candidly confess ourselves desirous of reaching, because they are always clear, animated, conclusive, demonstrative, and because they often reach the highest eloquence. Such, for instance, is the paper addressed to the Marquis of Mirabeau, published at the end of the first volume of the original edition of the Letters, dated from the Donjon of Vincennes. We possess the draught of this paper in his own handwriting, with curious alterations, explanatory notes, and a long appendix, of which we shall avail ourselves, as occasion may require. However valuable these public documents may be, we have entirely laid them aside, as, like every *ex parte* defence, they might be liable to some suspicion.

We have, therefore, done that which Mirabeau himself demanded so often, so long, and always in vain: we have submitted his youth to debateable inquiry, and the recapitulation of our account seems easy and palpable.

Sprung from a race distinguished, during five centuries, by an unruly originality of character, Mirabeau was morally and naturally endowed with faculties that far exceeded the common standard. His boyhood, his youth, and the first years of his manhood, were fiery and tempestuous, badly understood and badly directed. He was turbulent, because such is the explosion of youth, which, according to the designs of

Providence, struggles both in body and in mind, that each may arrive at maturity. He felt restive, because he was injudiciously checked. He was disorderly, because he was made to dislike the rules imposed upon him without his being allowed to understand them. He was passionate, because harsh authority excited a natural hastiness of temper which kind reasoning would have assuaged. He was ungovernable, because the use of superior force was persisted in, without even that forbearance which prudence always grants to weakness. Finally, he was affectionate, kind-hearted, obliging, generous, sincere, having the instinct, the will, and a passion for good. His errors, all considered, amount to some pranks of idle folly, some inconsiderate expenses, some love intrigues, and some garrison broils. And where is the man who has not committed petty faults, similar to those of which Mirabeau was accused with such rancorous bitterness by his father, who never excused anything, and by his biographers, because the most brilliant lustre that surrounds great men throws a light, by its penetrating reflection, into the recesses in which the errors of private life are generally concealed ?

Such is our opinion, which we express with a confidence arising from our labours, for we have only endeavoured to convince others of facts we are ourselves convinced of. This same persuasion doubtless existed also in that asylum to which the instigations of

enemies cannot find their way—in the deepest recess of the Marquis of Mirabeau's conscience, since he resolved that his son should marry long prior to his having attained his twenty-third year. He had even thought of it a year before *.

" An honest man should first of all know whether his wares are sound, and that was my first duty. I have accordingly examined your nephew most minutely, and I believe that, if he remains a few years longer under your guidance, I may answer for his becoming a man of whom an adoptive family will be proud. This is all that is required. A woman of good sense and amiable temper would effect the remainder.

* " The Baron of Langier has informed me that Mademoiselle de Castellane, the one who is called Rosalie, is tall, well made, and a pretty brunette; that her father, who is styled 'the cripple,' would bestow her willingly upon your son, if agreeable to you. Mind and examine with some attention the origin of the Rouillés, to see whether they do not contain what we term 'some yellow' with regard to Malta."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated May* 30*th* 1770.

" We have, in Provence, some good alliances; little Marignane, for instance, who, should she ever have a brother, will always possess at least 600,000 francs. If I could but succeed in upsetting that unworthy 'yellow hue' concerning Malta, which I consider the most unjust exclusion, our little neighbour Peyrolle would prove another good match."—*Unpublished Letter from the Bailli to the Marquis of Mirabeau, dated August* 10*th* 1779.

Some of our readers may probably not be aware that the words "yellow hue" related to the fact, or to the supposition, which was not controverted, of some misalliances, which might debar certain nobles from being admitted into the order of Malta.

I flatter myself therefore that, when we propose him, people will trust to our word, and that a father who consents to take a son-in-law, not twenty-two years of age, from our blood, will not expect him to be altogether tempered *.

* Unpublished Letter from the Marquis to the Bailli of Mirabeau, dated September 30th 1770.

APPENDIX TO BOOK III.

We stated, that in giving a short account of the rural and litigious labours in Limousin, of which Mirabeau, while yet a mere youth, acquitted himself with great ability, we should produce some separate extracts from the "Ephemerides of the Citizen," relative to a court of arbitrators, established chiefly through his exertions. We insert these extracts with the more pleasure, because they offer us many attractions, and are buried in an entirely forgotten collection, which is now so scarce, that even the Royal Library has but an imperfect copy.

On the one hand, our extracts show what, sixty years ago, was the state of a province to which poverty had rendered the feudal system more intolerable than usual. On the other, they will place in a light as interesting as new, the subject of these memoirs, who, at the age of twenty-one, spent, as we have already stated, some months on the estate of Aigueperse, in Limousin, and was represented as having acted an infamous and extravagant part, by one of those inventions imagined by fantastic minds, and collected by ignorant compilers, which daily offend reason, truth, and propriety, in these our days of historical and literary saturnalia *.

* We speak here of a presumed anecdote taken from the "Révue du Midi" by the "Cabinet de Lecture," of the 19th of December, 1833, the "Voleur" of the following day, and the "Temps" of the 8th of January. It represents Mirabeau in the act of making a deliberate and cool trial of courage in "political innovations," and playing his "revolutionary" part, by rifling travellers on the highway. That the probability of the details may correspond with the

Finally, these extracts offer, by details both interesting and witty, a development of the real character of that Marquis of

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main point of the narrative, the fabricator makes the robber and the robbed appear equally stupid. The robbed (a decided coward, of course) having escaped from a pistol-shot, sets out some days after, at night too, for the purpose of exposing himself to another shot, in order that he may have the satisfaction of recognising the robber. The latter prudently takes care to keep, classify, and label nine stolen purses, that he may thus furnish the public prosecutor with nine material, autograph, and undoubted proofs of his crime, and thereby not escape the wheel.

Besides, the particulars of this invention, from their absurdity, are all of a piece. The Marquis du Saillant is there made a colonel, though he never was a soldier. Mirabeau is represented at Limousin as renowned for his fatal adventures, though he was never there after his twenty-first year. The writer mentions also the pretended original author of the story, namely, M. de Calissanne, whose name he does not even know correctly, for it is spelled Gallitzane, and who will not deny it, as he is dead. However short this note may be, we should reproach ourselves for its insertion were it the mere refutation of a ridiculous story; but we have in some measure been compelled to write it by the following letter, which we here insert, to comply with the feelings of filial affection by which it was prompted.

" My dear Gabriel, you certainly owed me this note, after having imposed silence upon me, Mirabeau's favourite niece, and the grand-daughter of his father, who in his old age, would be mild only with me; the beloved daughter of that Marquis du Saillant, so unaffected and so kind, but at the same time so noble and firm, but who is made to appear like a simpleton in a melodrama, if not like a profligate of the regency.

" I no longer blame your opposition. I promise you that I will write neither to the fabricator, nor to the hawkers of this clumsy calumny; I will speak only to history, and not to journals which will live but a day. I approve of your note, though rather barren and incomplete, but on condition you add to it, 1st, that my father was, during twenty-eight years, the friend, often the defender, always the adviser, and never the mentor nor the gossip of Mirabeau; 2nd, that I, their dear Josephine, do, in the name of all my ascending relatives, in the name of that venerable father, in the name of my aunt de Cabris, who died in the arms of us both, in the name of my mother, who was also like a mother to yourself, and loved you as her son, acknowledge in you alone the right and power to contradict all the nonsense, atrocity, and scandal that has been heaped upon Mirabeau's memory; that you alone have right and authority to write his life, of which you have received all the materials, either from himself or from us in his name; and that we finally acknowledge you, and none but you.

" It is with pleasure, my dear friend, that I avail myself of this opportunity to give open and public testimony of the intimate and fraternal feelings

Mirabeau, who has already been described, and will appear still more inexorable and despotic, as the chief of a family, and yet who will be shown worthy of the title he gave himself, of "the friend of men;" speaking a language far superior to that contained in his writings, exposing, with ingenious perspicuity, his doctrines on political economy, which are here both clear and sound—fulfilling, in a word, the active duties of a practical philosopher, whom we should praise without reserve, were not a little ostentation mixed up with the admirable functions he assumed.

BURREAU DE CONCILIATION (CONCILIATION OFFICE).

L'Elephant, honteux et surpris,
Lui dit: et parmi nous que venez-vous donc faire?
Partager un brin d'herbe entre quelques fourmis.
Nous avons soin de tout. ———

LA FONTAINE.

THE artless and sublime poet from whom the above lines are taken, is here, as in so many other places, the organ of Providence and of nature, interpreting to us the Divine Author's intentions. Nothing is great or small to the immense and supreme Being. Let us fear to appear criminal and despicable in his sight, if in our littleness we give way to the haughty propensity of looking only above ourselves, striving after that which we cannot attain, neglecting those about us, looking down upon our inferiors, producing great and little things, and forgetting that nothing is great but justice, and nothing little in the order of justice, and in the means of concord and peace. So thought the author of an institution which appears to be respectable under the title of "Conciliation Office."

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which have united us ever since Mirabeau fondly held us both on his knees. Your having just finished your great and conscientious work, and fulfilled your mission, gives you a new claim to my affection and lasting gratitude.

(Signed) "JOSEPHINE SIREY,
"born du Saillant.

"*Paris, January 10th*, 1834.
"To M. Lucas Montigny, Paris."

We shall give an account of it to the public by stating the thing itself, and the circumstances that led to it. We trust it will be considered worthy of approbation; indeed, we have some reason to hope so, and should we appear mistaken in this hope, it would prove that we had yet, by our lucubrations, made but little progress in our mission.

Last year the Marquis of Mirabeau took possession of an estate of considerable extent, conferring great seigneurial rights, and situated in one of the most inaccessible provinces of the kingdom. He knew, for many years, the peculiar character of the inhabitants of that province. They are rather uncivilised, when compared with those of the other parts of the kingdom. They are enterprising, and even ferocious in their quarrels, and against those who would vex them, but in other respects well disposed. They are grateful to excess, even to generosity, and are attached to their nobles and feudal lords, from whom they will bear that which they would not endure from others. They are simple, credulous, and yet wary, but imbued with a prejudice too common among the peasantry of all nations in Europe, and which impresses them, as it were, with a character of patience to endure, arising from their belief, that to be oppressed by those who are the strongest, richest, cleverest, and most influential, is as inevitable as rain and hail. This belief, which is unfortunately not altogether unfounded, makes the poor gloomy, mistrustful, obstinate, and very little inclined to listen to reason touching their own interests; but it makes them also enthusiastically and entirely devoted to any person whom they have once found equitable, impartial, and incapable of injustice.

The tradesmen are generally active, laborious, attentive to their business, to rural commerce, and even to matters of greater importance. They are moral, united like a family, display feelings of delicacy and honour, are always ready to oblige with zeal and capacity, and are submissive, without being mean; submissive, I say, which is a social quality nearly eradicated in the kingdom now filled with rich upstarts, whence it follows that the mean and foolish pride of these same upstarts becomes the universal epidemic.

These reputable tradesmen esteem each other, and practise the most marked cordiality, together with all the virtues akin to hospitality. A little pride, a distemper produced by the creation of so

many new nobles, and fomented by the abuse of privileges and exclusions, is the ruin of those who become tainted by it; but many, and in greater number there than any where else, have the good sense to guard against it.

Finally, a nobility more pure, more numerous and poorer than in the provinces where opulence might quite absorb it, has nevertheless retained less of the national character than the other orders, because their inclination for the army, quite natural and necessary, makes them bring back an admixture of command and servitude, which is the soul of the legionary, especially at a time when it is the prevailing error to form a kind of militia, the private of which must be as complete a tool as the firelock he carries.

The union of families, frankness, liveliness, cordiality, among neighbours, courage, dignity of conduct, obliging manners and delicate attentions:—these are the virtues of this population. Great loss of time, and some ambitious ostentation, which produce want of order in their private affairs, and the defects resulting from their pecuniary embarrassments, constitute their imperfections.

To these different shades of local character, we must add the natural influences of a rigorous climate and difficult outlets for produce. This is the reason why the whole country is nothing but pasture land, timber, and chestnut trees; and that agriculture, which in this country is only an accessary to pasturage, is carried on by the inadequate and slow method now practised by the farmers.

The system of farming is here, as is well known, a kind of voluntary renunciation of all interest in the soil, on the part of the owner and the agriculturist. The owner gives his farm and as much cattle as may be required to cultivate it, to a man who merely brings his labour and a family destitute of every thing, and who in consideration of some advances to live on, and feed the cattle, engages to till the ground, and take charge of the cattle, with the understanding, that he is to share, at the harvest, the produce of the one, and at sales the increase of the other. In this state of things, the owner only thinks of making the most of his farmer. In the first place, he makes him pay all the taxes, and often purchase the seed. If there are many chestnut trees on the farm, he will require half of this spontaneous production. In one word, the owner squeezes as much out of the farmer as he can, and considering him and

his oxen as so many domestic animals, burdens them with carriage, employing them at all times for journeys, conveying or removing goods, &c. On the other hand, the farmer strives to live with the least possible labour, to lay out the most ground in pasturage or *pacages*, because the profit arising from the increase of the cattle costs him no trouble. The little he tills, is to raise provisions of scarcely any value, fit only for his own food, such as buckwheat, radishes, &c. His only enjoyments are laziness and slowness; his only hope, a good crop of chestnuts; his only voluntary occupation, begetting children.

Indeed, as such agriculturists have neither the will, nor the means of paying wages, they can be helped in their labours only by their own family, which becomes for them, if not a fortune, at any rate an absolute want. The rest of the people, poor journeymen, seldom employed, and almost always when they are, for their food alone, consist of some families who have some trifling means, and a much greater number who live on spontaneous produce, and the milk of a few goats which devour the hedges, the brambles, the enclosures, and the wood. This picture will enable the reader to form a notion of the state of degradation in which these wretched people live, and of the servility in which they are kept by men far from being inhuman, but whose prejudices, especially among the nobles, makes them consider a peasant as a being of a different nature from themselves. He is assisted, protected, and but seldom wronged; but he is despised, being reduced to subjection if he is easy and good-natured, and tormented and exasperated if he is the reverse.

The new lord had heard this people address their complaints, and submit their affairs to his mother-in-law. But she was the daughter of their old lords; she was born and had been educated among them; she understood and very nearly spoke their language. He enjoyed none of these advantages, and yet not only did he see them arrive from all quarters, loaded, at a time of dearth, with presents which they pressed upon his acceptance, declining all kind of remuneration if he did not wish to grieve them, but they also came to him with their papers, laying their private affairs before him. He saw them actually tremble, an emotion little suited to man, that excellent creature so dear to the divinity, and who, if left in full possession of his natural freedom, would not tremble were the earth itself to gape at

his feet, and call him to her depths, since the earth's bosom is the just man's resting-place, as her surface is the table of man, who is the guest of the author of all good. As he saw this, conscience, his only formidable judge, said to him:

"This was not given to thee merely to live, but life was given to thee for action, action was bestowed upon thee to do good, and thou wert endowed with volition, that thou mightest direct thy action. Daily hold out a helping hand to thy poor brethren; or if thy station call thee to other duties, choose representatives with whom I may be satisfied, and do thy duty."

This pressing conviction acting upon him, inspired him with an idea which we shall soon see him carry into execution. He charged his son, a young man twenty-one years old, heir to his estates, with this matter, more easily conceived than realised in a country where nothing of the kind had ever been seen before, and where, as every where else, there are people whom honour and conscience do not debar from deriving profit from incidental questions, quarrels, and dissensions. The young man has acquitted himself with judgment and success: and it is also God that loves us so much, who lets us become fathers.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM COUNT TO THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU.

December 20th 1770.

I HAVE seen M. Poisson *; we have conversed about all your affairs, and especially about the court of arbitration †. He approves of my plan, but wants to add a notary to your tribunal. Though I had a great aversion to introducing the slightest tinge of chicanery, I thought that the alteration he proposed might in some instances be of use, to enable those whom the arbitrators might prevail upon to settle their differences, to terminate their business in legal form. M. Poisson was of opinion, that we required gentlemen of the law, that it might involve you in expensive lawsuits, and that the

* This is the same Poisson who was formerly Mirabeau's instructor, and had then the administration of the estates in Limousin.—*Editor.*

† Viz., the weekly council of the arbitrators.—*Idem.*

intendant was first of all to be informed of it. I replied: 1. That these arbitrators were to be, if I might so call it, only unexceptionable witnesses, and were to be intimately acquainted with their parishes; that, besides, they would never be called upon to decide on any other cases than those in which Barthole and Cujacius would be of no use. 2. That your threat to have recourse to law had surely been made only to frighten obstinate cavillers. 3. That this tribunal was in reality only an assembly to adjust amicably the affairs of your parishes, and that nobody could object to you, or your confidential representative speaking to your peasants about their private concerns. Upon this it has been agreed to convene all the parish priests on Monday the 31st instant, at the chateau of A —— *. There I shall declare your intentions to them and to your officers of justice †, and engage them by fair speeches to second your views, and prevail upon their parishioners to appoint, on Monday the 1st of January next, three old men of their villages, chiefs of families, men enjoying public confidence, old inhabitants, to come on a certain day in the week and elect their arbitrators at the chateau of A———, where I shall dine with them.

The following are my reasons for the step I have taken: 1. Your officers of justice would have felt aggrieved by our arrangement, and the parish priests would have been offended that they had not been consulted, if I had not shown such deference to both. 2. How could I have managed with a mob of six thousand men, whom I do not understand, and who do not understand me? I have therefore addressed a circular to the parish priests, to inform them that you had charged me to communicate something respecting their parishes. I will provide them with a confidential person to enlighten them, under the pretence that I may be apprised of the result of their conference. I hope that with God's favour this will succeed.

NOTICE SENT TO THE PARISH PRIESTS.

The Marquis of M——, the true father of his vassals, is grieved to see that the slightest differences on his estates lead to lawsuits,

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* Aigueperse.—*Editor.*

† Viz., the officers of justice of the manor.—*Idem.*

which are both expensive, and destructive of the union he should like to see established in his parishes. Most of such lawsuits are mere misunderstandings, which at the outset might easily be adjusted by any honest and cool-headed person.

The Marquis of M—— thinks that the best way to inspire his vassals with the necessary confidence to submit their cases to arbitration, is to allow them to elect their own arbitrators.

The parish priests, the spiritual fathers of their flock, should co-operate, with all the zeal of paternal affection, in the kind intentions of the Marquis of M——, who relies upon their solicitude to assist him in the difficult undertaking of enlightening a great number of country people concerning their own interest, and uniting them in one common will.

He wishes, therefore, and has charged me to beg, that the parish priests will have the goodness to assemble their parishioners at the close of mass; that they will acquaint their flocks with his kind intentions, and point out to them the advantages of amicable adjustments, which will be facilitated by the joint co-operation of eight individuals of acknowledged skill and probity, fully acquainted with the business of their parish, and enjoying the confidence of its inhabitants, and who are to become arbitrators of their respective parishes only by free and voluntary election.

The object now is to have a man of good repute elected, in every parish, by a majority of votes. The Marquis of M—— further requires that the arbitrator should be the father of a family, which cannot but make him feel a greater interest in the public welfare; and he shall have reached a middle age, as he will then be better acquainted with circumstances that may influence a decision by arbitration. The parish priests are further called upon to take some interest in this measure. The Marquis of M—— relies as much on their testimony as on their advice in the different points of litigation which may be submitted to the decision of the arbitrators.

But as it is very possible, and that is all the Marquis of M—— wishes, that cases may be brought under the cognizance of this court of arbitration which, to come at a correct decision, may require a certain knowledge of the law,—M. Poisson, who is worthy of confidence in every respect, not only from his acquirements and perfect

integrity, but also on account of his having already been elected in the parish in which he resides, by reason of the many adjustments he has already effected, has consented to preside over the court of arbitrators, who, by the care of the parish priests, may be elected in every parish, and will, on every first Sunday of each month assemble at the chateau of A——, where M. Poisson will provide them with dinner in the name and as the representative of the Marquis of M——. This tribunal is further to have a notary, who will enable the parties coming to an amicable adjustment to put their arrangement into legal form immediately, so that there will be nothing wanting to render this institution as effective as could be desired.

The following, therefore, is the summary of all that the Marquis of M—— requests from the parish priests on the estates which compose his barony of ———, and the success of which I make bold to say they are bound to ensure.

To have elected in every parish, freely and voluntarily, a father of family, of a middle age, and in good repute—the election to be made at a public meeting, convened by the priest of the parish ;—to declare to the inhabitants of the parish that the eight persons elected shall assemble, and with the assistance of M. Poisson's knowledge, and the aid of a notary, hold their sessions on the first Sunday of every month for the purpose of arbitrating in the concerns of their respective parishes—with this understanding, however, and it is highly expedient that the priests should not forget to mention it to their parishioners, that the election and the submission of the several cases to arbitration are quite optional ; but that when once two parties shall have recurred to arbitration, if either draw back and go to law, the Marquis of M—— will completely side with the other party.

The priests are requested never to omit reminding their parishoners, on the last Sunday and holiday of every month, that on the Sunday following they can settle all their differences at the chateau of A——.

This project is too commendable, and its execution too advantageous, to leave a doubt that the priests will promote it by all the means in their power. The Marquis of M—— flatters himself that they will do so, and he hopes that after this institution (which can-

learnt what I now state to you. Under the most repulsive appearance, and the most dogged countenance, I discovered his openness and candour. He said to me—

" Sir, I am, from duty, the true messenger of peace, and you may inquire here whether or not I attend to that duty. As for the plan of the Marquis of M———, God grant that such institutions may be found among all men. I will tell you the truth. We have here M. de R———, who is a worthy man. It is his constant occupation to assist me in settling all differences and litigations. The whole parish confide in him as if they were his children. I dare assure you that he will at once be elected by universal consent, but as it is your wish that this election should proceed in regular form, allow us to defer it till Sunday next, for half my parish are at the fair."

" I assure you I felt the more inclined to be guided by that man's almanac, because five or six stout tradesmen and the sub-delegate said to me :—

" Sir, these people had formerly recourse to blows for the merest trifle, and waged a murderous and desperate war with those of S.P. *. Since this man's arrival all are at peace."

This is, I believe, in point of public men, the real touchstone. I ultimately came to the following arrangement with him. He told me the old story about the goats †, and thus it arose. The other day the keepers killed four of them, and the peasant resisted.

" Sir," said the priest, " it is a very good thing to destroy goats; they have eaten more cabbages and enclosures than I have got left; and there is besides, the decree of 1747, by the Parliament of Bourdeaux, which authorises their being destroyed. But we have here unfortunate beings who have only these goats to feed their children, and I know that some of my parishioners would rather be cut to pieces than allow their goats to be touched."

He thereupon presented a poor woman to me, who has two chil-

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* Saint Paul.—*Editor.*

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dren still in arms. She is again pregnant, has no milk, not an inch of land, and her sister suckles one of her children. I was affected at this sight. Two of her goats had likewise been killed. I asked what they were worth, and gave her twelve livres. I afterwards explained what I had often heard you say, that you would take care that those who were in great distress should be provided with milk, but that they were to have no goats. Had you seen this poor priest, in tears, throw his arms round my neck, and then approach the poor woman, nodding with his head as he shook her by the hand, unable to speak, as if from suffocation, and return to me still speechless, you also would have been deeply affected.

Another woman, in a most deplorable condition, came to tell me that a goat of hers had been killed, and the loss of it obliged her to beg. I highly disapproved of this last mode of living, and in consequence of my having been assured by the priest and the sub-delegate, that she was an honest woman, I have engaged her as a servant at the chateau, together with her son, who will take care of the cattle. These two circumstances were instantly all the talk of the village. If you had seen, like me, the eagerness with which its inhabitants, formerly so mutinous, doffed their hats; and had you beheld the pleasure that beamed from their countenances, you would have thought with me that those three hours had been well employed.

Leaving the kind priest of S. H., I proceeded to B *, where the assembled community has now elected M. L——, everybody exclaiming, "*Ché bon per lou labouradour et lou artitan*" (how kind to the labourer and the mechanic), and the peasants casting many a sarcasm at the gentlemen of the long robe, who laughed on the wrong side of their mouths. Do not forget, I beg of you, that the expenses of the notary, which will assuredly not amount to much, are not to be borne by the contracting parties, in order that nothing should bear the slightest resemblance to chicanery.

G. † has elected its arbitrator; but I do not yet know who he is.

S. B. ‡ has elected M. de L———.

S. G. § has elected M———, a honest old man, well versed in business.

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* Boisseil.—*Editor.*

† Glanges.—*Idem.*

‡ Saint Bonnet-la-Rivière.—*Idem.*

§ Saint Genieys.—*Idem.*

There now remain A. * and S. P. †, I fancy they will not be long in making their elections.

With respect to S. P., I believe that M. de ——— keeps that parish in the slavery of opposition. This may be proper; but it should not affect the rights of the direct and legal lord. This example made me think that a lord who neglects his estates, not only deserves to lose them, that is to say, that his vassals should withdraw from his land, but is also, in course of time, really placed in jeopardy.

You see, my dear father, that the matter is nearly accomplished. I have had some scruples on account of our arbitrators not being peasants, but, after some reflection, I thought this immaterial, as the elections have been free and unanimous. Why should I deprive those gentlemen of the benefit of the confidence they have inspired? Is not this confidence edifying? Will not this court of arbitration be more imposing with three chiefs, who are lords and are respected? I rely much on M. D———; his open and frank manner is analogous to the soil, and believe me, he will be able to make his boat sail.

LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU TO THE ARBITRATORS.

January 20th, 1771.

Gentlemen, my dear friends, neighbours, relatives, vassals, and inhabitants.

I have charged my son to testify to you the regret I feel at not being able to embrace you on the day of your first meeting, jingle glasses with you, and tell you by word of mouth what I now commit to paper.

I assure you I should feel greater pleasure in being present in your honourable assembly than at a royal banquet, or with the same number of ladies kindly disposed; for, as regards the ladies, I should have too many of them, and as to kings, though they are the chosen of God, and are on that account very respectable, the secrets of heaven in the choice of sovereigns are nevertheless impenetrable; whereas you are chosen by the people, by those who daily

* Alviges.—*Idem.* † Saint Paul.—*Idem.*

see you, have unanimously declared you *prud' hommes:* that is to say, good men, and have placed their interests and their passions in your hands. Can there be a more noble title? What testimony of worth can be more honourable? What society can be better than with such men who are going to make their virtue available to mankind?

I am almost vain-glorious at having had a share in bringing you together, and because I am about to participate, if not by my deed, at least by my will, in the good you are preparing to establish.

When I have been able to give myself up to sweet and elevated thoughts, I have seen that in the sublime prayer which we daily repeat in the words of our divine legislator, we are required to ask God for "our daily bread," whilst he everywhere recommends peace. Our master has thus told us, that God is to give us bread, and that we are enjoined to give peace. If we do not therefore wish to condemn ourselves to be here below no more than despicable and rebellious children, it behoves us to cherish and promote peace.

Besides, how amiable is peace! how sweet her works! What difference do we find between the gratitude depicted on the countenance and abounding in the speech of a man whose grievances we have redressed, of a woman whose child we have picked up, of a child whose stray flock we have secured, and the aspect of a man who threatens, of a woman who yields to anger, of a child that throws stones and screams? Without having recourse to extremes, do not the very symptoms of polished enmity, or even of coldness and gross indifference, seem a distemper, a reciprocal curse, when compared with the joy and confidence inspired by the neighbourhood and conversation of a benevolent, kind, and obliging man?

These striking marks and outward differences designate still more forcibly a real blessing or a daily curse. It is manifest, and all things proclaim it each day, that we can none of us do without each other; that, without the help of our brethren, we should be unable to obtain the bread which God promises to our prayers, grants to our labours, gives us only day by day as life and light, whoever we may be. The king himself, the protector of our lives and properties, the Lord's anointed, is indebted to the hands of the labourer, the miller, the baker, and many others, for the bread he may want in the course of the day to give him strength to command to-morrow.

Among the multitude of services by which men assist each other in life, and in the promotion of happiness in this world, some morose and dull persons acknowledge only those which they pay for; they have no other notion of payment than the one in money, and would therefore wish for all the money the world contains that they might have all men's services. But we, who have had the happiness of having been born, and of having lived in the country, have neither our hearts nor our views so dried up and straitened. We see that the goodness of heaven loads us with benefits which we are able to repay by acts of gratitude alone; that frost prepares our fields, snow enriches their soil, rain irrigates them, heat re-animates them, and calm weather brings maturity. What wealth could enable us to purchase all these blessings—to indemnify their abundant source? It is from this pressing question that the false rich man turns his brutified ear; but we, with a sacred pride, based on the privilege of being daily witnesses of that visible circle of benefits and remunerations, dare listen to the voice of heaven, and we hear it proclaim:—

"I bring you peace, I give you peace, I recommend peace unto you."

Do you doubt, my honourable friends, that he who styled himself the "God of armies," because man's malice had rendered armies necessary to establish and maintain peace upon earth, does not style himself with greater pleasure the "God of arbitrators," and that he will not cast a merciful look, and shower a blessing upon ten men who devote themselves to maintain peace and concord in a whole district? It is the distinct and reiterated order of heaven which you are going to execute. Happy is the high-minded man, at each instant, obliged to acknowledge a master, who learns distinctly what kind of service that master requires at his hands! Happy is the tender-hearted man, daily loaded with benefits by an invisible hand, who distinguishes, notwithstanding the veil that surrounds it, what kind of homage may be acceptable to his benefactor!

But it is not for laborious men to tarry long in the researches and feelings of the higher causes. Heaven requires thanksgivings, love of order, resignation to acts of justice, and labour which forms a part of them according to law. It shows us affectionate beings, our brethren, our kinsmen, and our necessary friends, ready to collect in

kind the tribute we owe to our Creator, and to present it to Him with their own hands. They prove to us that man is not to be bought, but that he becomes attached, offers himself, yields, and never withdraws from the confidence and attraction produced by benefits.

Those rustic and interesting men whom you are going to dismiss contented and relieved, have inspired me with the happy thought which now calls you together. When I saw them come to me, a stranger, but one on whom they had a claim, to bring me the first fruits of their harvest, and submit their affairs to my decision, whilst I wanted an interpreter to understand their language—when I saw them tremble, and in whose presence? (God is my witness that I never looked upon a poor labourer in any other light than that of an equal, and even of a master, if on a sudden it pleased Providence to reverse our lots,)—I said to myself, as if I were addressing another:

"The real want of these good people is quite clear; they ask for neither money, nor food, nor protection, though they are truly in want of them all; but they are aware that thou dost not owe them any. They ask of thee to throw light upon their difficulties, and put an end to their disputes. Dost thou not owe them this?"

"Undoubtedly: but I have appointed officers of justice, and thus my duty has been fulfilled."—"But dost thou not see that justice which pronounces, and arbitration which conciliates, are two different things; that thy officers can only judge, and are necessarily bound by a general rule requiring set forms, such forms demanding agents; that all the men cannot devote themselves to their profession unless they have a remuneration the amount of which creates costs of suit; that all costs are burthensome and often ruinous to these poor people; that besides, when the officers of justice have judged, there are distant superior tribunals, beyond the reach of the poor man confined to his labour, and that consequently even the obstinate, when he finally loses his suit, is always sure to ruin his opponent:—that there is, in one word, no justice here below for men who have not the means to pay for it. Hence wicked men spring up; for the feeble never revolt unless they are driven to extremities. Stay then to fulfil the hope of thy children, or resign a title which brings thee their confidence, to others who are able duly to answer their expectations."

I could do neither, gentlemen, and it was this anxiety of conscience that made me have recourse to you. I have met with more success than I anticipated. I have had the satisfaction of seeing my son further this good work. A meritorious clergy has deigned to listen to his voice and second his exertions. They assembled their parishioners; the people heard that they were called upon to elect their arbitrators, they applauded, and you, gentlemen, were unanimously elected in your respective parishes. I have lived long enough for circumstances to have made me known in many places; but I should be without a country if such trials were required before a man was acknowledged a citizen.

You, my honourable friends, will help me to become so in the province in which you dwell. Your equity, your kindness, and your knowledge will bear good fruit; the example of the first barony in this province will encourage similar institutions in other provinces which may have the same wants. The humble share I have had in this great good will be remembered; also that I conceived the first idea of it; that my son made the first proposal; that he had the happiness to be present at the first meeting; that a man *, born, like myself, in a different country, but endowed with a candour, equity, and dignity of soul which render him worthy of being your associate, was so obliging as to represent me there; and your grandchildren on coming to take their seats in the same hall which you are now going to honour with your presence, will there meet little shepherds who, having traced a head on the green bark of a chestnut branch, will plant it in the grass and in the shade, exclaiming, "This is VICTOR † who invented the arbitrators, held in such great repute."

Friends, neighbours, and masters, my heart experiences a sweet joy in thinking of all the good you are going to effect, and in throwing away all care about the evil you are going to prevent. Conciliate, arbitrate, and even judge. Your judgments enslave no one, you are the organs of truth and circumstances, and you take nothing from the law. It and its tribunals remain for those who may not be satisfied with your decisions. I charge you, however,

* Poisson.—*Editor.*

† The Marquis of Mirabeau's Christian name.—*Editor.*

to make known that if an obstinate and litigious man, deemed so by yourselves, should think to gain advantage over his opponent, tire him out and exhaust his means, by carrying the cause from one tribunal to another, I shall in such case consider it incumbent upon me to assist the oppressed, and I hereby direct that all the costs of his defence be defrayed from my own funds.

But I hope that such a case, which would at any rate be very rare, especially in a country the inhabitants of which are more violent than unreasonable, much inclined to confidence, and very submissive to the local authorities, will not occur. Moreover, I shall be the first to testify my regard for you and to invoke your authority in my own affairs.

I am, &c.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE COUNT TO THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU.

February 4th, 1771.

Let us return to our meeting of arbitrators. All passed off with decorum and even dignity. M. Poisson read a pompous speech, and I perceived that after your excellent letter and the several speeches, I could have but little to say, as you will see at the end of M. Poisson's speech, a copy of which I enclose. There were six arbitrators present, and I cannot give you a better and more simple account of the proceedings than by sending you the resolutions. I will further relate a trifling anecdote. In reading your letter, when I came to the words "and your grandchildren coming to take their seats," &c., I read it with all the simplicity and nobleness that I could give to the expression of an idea so pleasing and paternal, and I could distinctly perceive a change of countenance in each of the arbitrators. Tears started into their eyes. I confess that I felt a kind of suffocation, and was obliged to draw my breath. It really does the L——s * much honour.

* Limousins.—*Editor.*

EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTERS OF THE MEETING OF THE TRIBUNAL OF CONCILIATION, ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY 1ST 1771, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU, AND HELD BY THE ARBITRATORS OF HIS BARONY OF P. B. *.

On this day, February 3rd 1771, after the mass of the Holy Ghost, celebrated at the Chateau d'A——, were installed, under the authority of the Marquis of Mirabeau, in presence of the Count of Mirabeau, his son, at the tribunal of conciliation, M.M. P——, L——, M——, T——, P——, and F——, &c. The session of the tribunal was opened by the Count of Mirabeau reading a letter written by his father to the gentlemen composing the aforesaid tribunal, together with his, the Count's, reply. The tribunal then came to the following resolutions:—

I. "That the letters, speech, and reply aforesaid be registered."

II. "That an answer be written to the Marquis of Mirabeau in the name of the deputies and inhabitants present at the opening of the said tribunal, and that such answer do contain thanks, &c."

III. "That, considering the impossibility of settling anything at present, the names of those who will submit to arbitration shall be taken down, and the tribunal put in possession of the papers relating to their cases, which shall for that purpose be collected and placed in the hands of the arbitrator of their respective parishes, who will bring the parties to a compromise if possible, and report the same at the next meeting."

After this the peasants were admitted. The following is the result of part of the cases heard.

In the case of Anthony F——, of the village of ——, in the parish of ——, against Leonard C——, of the burgh of ——.

This case had reference to a hire of cattle for half the profit, concerning which an action had been brought in the jurisdiction of ——. The parties agreed to reduce the sum in dispute to thirty livres, including principal, interest, and costs. The plaintiff acknowledged that he had received eight livres from the defendant, who promised to pay the aforesaid plaintiff seven livres the next

* Peter Buffière.—*Editor.*

day, and the fifteen remaining livres next Ash Wednesday. The Sieur M——, notary to the tribunal, is charged to report, at the next meeting, the consummation of this agreement.

In the case of Catherine G——, wife of Francis D——, of the village of ——, in the parish of ——.

Against Francis G——, her father.

This case refers to an action for the payment of a dowry which complainant alleges to be due to her by her father, it being derived from her mother's estate. The tribunal has referred the parties to the Sieur L——, to hear and bring them to an understanding, if possible, and to report the issue at the next meeting.

In the case of Leonard ——, of the parish of ——, against Thomas G——, of the same parish.

This case relates to an inheritance of land belonging to G———, and of which Leonard ——— has taken unlawful possession without a title, and discharged many debts for which that land was mortgaged. The parties have agreed to abide by the decision of Messrs. P—— and M——, father and son, whom the tribunal has appointed to be arbitrators in this case.

In the case of Gaspard C———, of the parish of ———, plaintiff, for indemnity claimed from the proprietors of the mines of ———, in consequence of the damage occasioned by their wagons going across one of his fields. The plaintiff having expressed his willingness to abide by what the tribunal might be pleased to determine, the said tribunal appointed the Sieur de L——— arbitrator, and upon his report, assigned for every year six livres as an indemnity; which has been accepted by the plaintiff.

You may conceive, my dear father, from this sketch, how useful and permanent your tribunal may become. The peasants were so numerous, that we were unable to attend to more than a quarter of the cases they brought.

SPEECH MADE ON THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1771, AT THE OPENING OF THE TRIBUNAL OF CONCILIATION AT A——, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE COUNT OF ——.

SIR,

Whilst the Marchioness of Vassan was still alive, and your father had yet nothing but the mere administration, under a burthensome

title, of the barony of P. B., he already, by memorable and purely gratuitous services, anticipated the wants of the inhabitants. On the first intelligence of the calamity which has now afflicted this province for the space of two years, he wrote to me these words, worthy of being engraven on marble, as a perpetual lesson to landlords:

"I understand that calamity comes over our poor people in a manner which calls me to my duty. The times are unfavourable, and Providence humbles and afflicts me, by imposing it upon me, after so hard a year to me as the last, on account of the heavy payments I have made. But I have still some plate, and these poor people have nothing but empty bowls of wood. I have given orders that work shall be given to such as can obtain none. It is out of my power, however, to bestow more than 6,000 livres upon this charity, from the present time until the labours of the field commence."

In a second letter he states to me:

"I will have no taxes: I want only a hundred pistoles as my share. Besides, if there be any person in poverty, any valetudinarian, any invalid, any worn out by age, or any other sufferer who has not been relieved, you know my heart, and I place it at the discretion of yours."

Every one knows how soon the execution followed this promise. Labour was publicly announced, distributed and paid for, and your father's inexhaustible charity would moreover furnish his share of provisions to the poor of each of the eight parishes in this barony.

The number of such acts of benevolence, and his always combining the practice of all the social virtues with the precepts which he has laid down in his writings, justify the title which the Marquis of M——— has given himself these twenty years past, and he has so well earned:—a title, Sir, the glory of which I have seen you, from the tenderest age, jealous of sharing and which even then you preferred to all those which decorate your illustrious house. Your desire must be satisfied: the gate is unclosed to the impatient wish of doing good, which you have ever manifested; and from the end of the career, constantly pursued by your father with so much honour, he calls upon you to follow his footsteps, as he is desirous that the tribunal of Conciliation should be

this day solemnly opened through your mediation, and under your auspices. This is a new proof of his paternal tenderness for his vassals, and the mere proposal of this institution has generally delighted all to whom it has been communicated. Contemplate your work, Sir! Behold all the parishes of this jurisdiction assembled, at your call, in the mansion of your ancestors. Behold these venerable fathers of families, these wise and peaceful men, invested with the confidence of their community and honouring its choice, elected to form part of this areopagus. See this assembly, offering you their gratuitous labour and services, either to maintain, as much as possible, among their fellow creatures, the fraternal sentiments of union and concord, or to recall, by the voice of mediation, those that were about to depart from them!

What advantages may we not expect to derive from such an association? For rapacity, subversive of every social tie, exercises no less its ravages in the country than in towns. It there drags, as everywhere else, in its train, oppression, injustice, altercation among neighbours, quarrels in families, jealousies, murderous acts of revenge, contempt for and abuse of the law, and ruinous law-suits. By preventing and destroying the source of so much disorder and misery, either by the ascendency of example, or by solid reasoning, or by the persuasive eloquence of the kindest exhortations, the only means the tribunal can think of employing, is not this institution calculated to impart a new life to agriculture, by restoring to labour either a time which is valuable, on which success often depends, but which is lost in the pursuit of law proceedings; or money required for advances which it will return with usury, and which would unfortunately be wholly absorbed without a remedy in the costs of law-suits? Will it not restore the harmony of society, and cause its regeneration in a country, confined within narrow limits, and reduced to a small number of individuals, who, from the vast objects they have to bring into action, are the more i want of the full amount of their strength, and of accordance in their fraternal exertions? In fine, will it not reduce to practice, in its real sense, the precept of charity, and in some respect participate in the ministry of angels?

To execute all this, as far as possible, in compliance with the

wishes of the Marquis of M———, under his authority, and with the aid of his protection, is what is aimed at by the tribunal of Conciliation, which you have just now installed.

THE COUNT OF M———'S REPLY.

GENTLEMEN,

I have nothing to add to what has just been said by M. Poisson, or to my father's letter which I have read to you, except to express the lively sense I entertain of the honour and pleasure I derive from being treated by you as a fellow countryman and brother, and from being in an humble degree instrumental to the execution of my father's good intentions. You have some knowledge of his heart, gentlemen, you understand it;—this is all my being his son will allow me to express.

M. Poisson has briefly described the object of your mission, and the spirit that should preside over your deliberations. Let us consider together what may be the readiest form and order for your labours and their results.

Worthy intentions should be followed up by wise measures, which it would ill become me to suggest.

There are, however, two principal points on which M. Poisson and I are agreed, and which, I am inclined to believe, ought to form the basis of your deliberations.

Your arbitration is purely voluntary. Whoever hears but one side hears nothing. Therefore the arbitrators are not to decide in any case, but with the consent and in the presence of both parties.

The small number of your meetings leaves you but a very short and very valuable time, which should not be neglected; it might be entirely lost in reading papers and in debates. It appears expedient, for the sake of despatch, that every case submitted to the arbitration of the tribunal of Conciliation should in the first instance be referred to the arbitrator of the parish to which it belongs, in order that he may be able to draw up his report in a concise and clear manner. The arbitrators will then be able to pass

judgment by a majority of votes, at the following meeting. Happy, thrice happy will it be, if each arbitrator can, in the discussion of each case, place it in its true light, and succeed in bringing it to a close before he reports it here! How worthy would he be of his colleagues, and how highly would his colleagues be respected in him!

M. POISSON'S LETTER TO THE MARQUIS OF M———.

February 7th, 1771.

MY DEAR MASTER,

Your son has, no doubt, informed you that on Sunday the 3rd instant, at the close of the mass of the Holy Ghost, celebrated at the chapel of the chateau of A——, by the Abbe M———, the tribunal of conciliation was installed, composed of—

The Count of ———

P.*, president, as Scagnarelle was a physician.

De L———, ex-lieutenant of the Seneschal of ———, and arbitrator of B———.

Jean Baptiste F———, arbitrator of G.

Joseph M———, mechanic, arbitrator of S. G.

Barthelemi, J———, notary, arbitrator of S. P.

Leonard P———, shopkeeper, arbitrator of A.

The members were introduced by your son, walking at the head of the arbitrators, escorted by the keepers in their state liveries, into the great hall, and placed round a large table covered with a green cloth; where, when all had taken their seats, having saluted each other right and left, according to custom, your son opened the session, by reading your letter to the arbitrators. You may well conceive, my dear master, that this letter was unanimously applauded by the new tribunal, whom it really honoured and flattered, and by the numerous assemblage of peasants of all your parishes, whom curiosity or business had brought to the chateau, and who, I believe, took every thing in good earnest.

When the letter had been read, it was resolved — 1, That the letter

* M. Poisson.—*Editor.*

should be registered in full in the first page of the journal of the meeting, as a valuable testimony of the glory of the tribunal and its founder; 2, That very humble thanks should be returned to the Marquis, in the name of the areopagus and of all present, for the obliging things he had been so kind as to write to the arbitrators, who will always consider it their duty to please him, and who promise him to use all their endeavours to justify the good opinion he entertains of their zeal and talents, and for his good and fatherly intentions towards his vassals; 3, That the president should be entrusted with the double commission of reporting every thing to the Marquis, and registering their proceedings; to which the president aforesaid replied, "AMEN! AMEN!"

The said president then made a short speech half a quarter of an hour in length, merely to prove that twice two make four,—that is to say, that a compromise is better than a law-suit. He regulated the limits of jurisdiction and its power by the ascendency of example, the authority of solid reasoning, and the persuasive eloquence of fraternal exhortations. All this was said to appease the alarms of the lieutenant-general and the procureur du roi, already bewildered, as we have been assured, by the measures which your son had on a former occasion announced you would take against the obstinate. This threat seemed to indicate a kind of co-action; as if it were not proper to assist the feeble with money and advice against the powerful, who would take advantage of his want of these things to oppress him.

The Count replied in a few words to the speech of S. P., and it was likewise resolved that the two speeches should also be registered at the end of the Marquis's letter. This done, the tribunal left their seats, and repaired to the council-chamber to deliberate in private on the affairs that should be brought before them, a necessary precaution to prevent confusion and noise.

I was near forgetting to tell you that the priests of A——— and G———, besides C———, were present at the meeting, and were requested to take their seats among the arbitrators, to which they acceded.

As your son has still the decisions of the tribunal, I am unable, my dear master, to give you an account of the different judgments which have been pronounced. I only recollect that they got through

seven or eight cases, and that I set the example, by submitting to their decision, on the report of L———, the indemnity claimed from the gentlemen concerned in the mines *, by Gaspard C———, in consequence of the damage the wagons annually occasion, and which was valued at six livres a-year.

I have the honour to observe to you, that C———, who has taken a liking to the institution, has been of very great use to us: 1, By his knowledge of legal forms and usages; 2, By a certain tact necessary to lead the peasantry to conciliation; so that I consider it highly essential for the maintenance of the new tribunal, and for its utility, that C——— should not only become one of us, but that he should in some measure be obliged to be present at every meeting.

You might, without inconvenience, let him preside; and let me preserve, if you think fit, the title of honorary chairman. This would diminish neither my zeal nor my promptitude, and every thing would most assuredly go on better.

The meeting closed at half-past one, and was succeeded by a very good dinner. Permission was requested to drink to the health of the founder of the tribunal, never more truly entitled to the name of conciliatory than at the conclusion of the meal. The members embraced each other like so many brothers, without distinction, right and left, all interchanging the warmest protestations.

Some further cases were gone into after dinner, but were prudently referred to the arbitrators of the respective parishes, to investigate them, and report thereon at the first meeting of the tribunal. *Et factum est vespere et mane dies unus,* and every one returned home, *gaudens a conspectu concilii.*

This, my dear master, is in sum the result of the first meeting, with which I think every one was satisfied. If the institution is kept up, it may be of the greatest service; but if we wish to avoid committing injustice, it should be under the direction of a gentleman of the law, well acquainted with the local bye-laws: for two wrong decisions would be the ruin of the tribunal, which, as you

* The mines of Glanges, worked under the direction of Poisson, on behalf of the Marquis of Mirabeau and a company of shareholders.—*Editor.*

will easily conceive, is watched closely by the other jurisdictions, likely to lose by it some of their customers.

I cannot refrain from expressing to you, that the greatest praise is due to your son for the manner in which he conducted every thing.

REPLY OF THE MARQUIS OF MIRABEAU TO M. POISSON.

February 16*th* 771.

MR. PRESIDENT, IN SPITE OF HIMSELF,

My son had anticipated your letter by giving me an account of the first meeting on the morning after it took place; but my chancellor's letter was not the less welcome to me. Whatever he may say, I cannot see what he and Scagnarelle can have in common, except his aptitude in quoting Latin to those who do not understand it. With this exception, the more he persists in the *nolo episcopari*, the more does his modesty entitle him to hold the high office for which Providence seems from all eternity to have designed him. And if he were to hide himself in the middle of a forest, we would go, all the people, in one body, to look for him, and if he still persisted, we should proceed to consecrate him.

I am delighted with the whole of your account and your dignities, derived from the natural dignity of man, which is to contribute to the advantage of his fellow creatures, and your resolutions, and your embraces, and your tears; and this account animates me so much, that I have shed some of those *sweet tears* which you know I long since praised. I am very glad that my letter took effect. I return you my thanks for your speech, in which your friendship for me peeped forth so strongly. I am likewise much pleased with the letter from my son, and the more so because we did not formerly fear that he would be sparing in words.

There are still two arbitrators wanting to my satisfaction, and they are the more necessary as being the two most notable. I know that M. D——— had an available excuse in a very bad and very evident face-ache, which prevented him from going out; but as for the journey of my neighbour and friend L———, I am afraid

of the weather-cock dignity—not his, for his unanimous election and his morals prove him to be a good and excellent man without foolish vanity, but that of some neighbour of his, who may have led him to find an excuse, and made him believe that it is beneath the dignity of a man like him to take a seat among his inferiors.

Alas! how long shall we think that we should defer all thoughts of equality, until we find ourselves placed in the burial-ground? How long shall we remain ignorant of the truth, that every natural superiority, of birth, riches, dignity, &c. requires an equivalent superiority of morals, else it only tends to degrade us; that in all cases, it is pride that lowers, and brotherly kindness that raises us to an equality, which many of the most illustrious races have never attained? All we can do against this prejudice, still more repugnant in the country, where nothing belonging to the nobles is contested, is to encourage our inferiors, and set a good example to our equals. I am going to write to L———: I will not suppose that he expected it, but I will anticipate him. I shall propose to him to have the meeting at his house. I am not afraid of being unable to bring him to a point; but to persuade is quite another matter, and that is a thing which I entrust to your delicacy and wisdom, for if we are once sure of him, all will go on well.

You perceive that there is no chance under these circumstances of relieving you from the burthen of the chair. The kind Madame C———, with whom you are acquainted, told me that a woman, under her care, far gone in pregnancy, said in the impatience, caused by protracted labour: "I am, however, to be brought to bed to-day." Being questioned whence she derived that certainty,

"My dear," was the reply, "if you had partaken of bread only once in the course of a year, you would be sure to recollect the day."

Your experience would be at a fault, like that of the aforesaid lady with regard to her delivery, if you expected to perfect the institution at one sitting. You have, besides, all the qualifications requisite for the office of president. 1st, You speak the French used on the other side the Loire, and this renders us of great consequence in our country: it is as imposing as a wig in the villages.

2nd, You are thought to be an honest man, and this is not to be found "under the foot of a mule," as good people say. 3rd, A good presence and rotundity, a great step towards obtaining respect. 4th, La Ch——'s * having fallen *in partibus infidelium*, does not prevent your being as good as the most delicate 5th, Wisdom, equity, kindness, and dexterity are articles which I shall take for granted in speaking of you, besides your knowledge, because, since you have forgotten something of your *Barthole*, you are inclined to think that you are expelled from vulgar things, which I infer from your fear of coming to wrong decisions, and your conviction that you are closely watched by those belonging to the jurisdiction. Now, in my opinion you need fear nothing of the kind. This is by no means a tribunal which can be assimilated to any of which we have a notion. Though there are undoubtedly many of the positive laws which contradict right and nature, we should nevertheless be acquainted with them, and likewise with usages, customs, and forms of practice, in order to decide correctly. This is requisite, I admit; but here to make persons agree and to engage them to compromise, either verbally or in presence of a notary, requires good sense, uprightness of heart, a general notion of the law of inheritance, and further a clear-headed notary who understands his business. As each of the arbitrators will have to report on the affairs of his parish, he will examine each case, make the necessary researches, and take the same counsel of himself which he would have done had he to bring about the conciliation by his own means. He will thoroughly prepare the case, the meeting will aid or decide, write, drink, embrace each other, and God will help you, because he rejoices when people decide pending questions that involve men and property, when they perform acts of peace, when they heartily drink together, and especially when they embrace each other; and it appears to me that he made our arms solely for the latter purpose.

Oh! my dear master, do not give way to these discouragements. Allow me to bring your virtues into action, your faculties into evidence, and your talents into practice; permit me to make known to my poor people who are and were their friends. C——, as far as

* Poisson's son, La Chabeaussière, who was said to have become an actor; but this supposition was afterwards contradicted.—*Editor.*

he has their confidence, will do; but if he were forced he would certainly mar the whole thing by the sin of omission, which is his favourite occupation. Do arbitrate, my dear friend; you will always judge better than a priest of Th——, formerly a captain of dragoons, who, with a cudgel in his hand, forced his parishioners either to come to an understanding or run away. They derived so much advantage from this system, that, ever since, they have compelled all his successors to become their only judges, whether they had a mind to do so or not.

With respect to the banquet, do in future as you did at first. As they embraced each other, that is all that is necessary; and it is not of this act that it will be said, "May death come of it!" I wish also to take the notary's costs upon myself, and that those good people may love me as you do. All will then be well. Whether the officers of the jurisdiction laugh or cry, Satan will not cry the less for it, and angels will laugh in heaven or in our soul, which is some day to be a celestial abode, in order that it may become what its author intended it should be.

Order the keepers to be in attendance on the days on which the tribunal is held. Punctuality should be observed at the first session, to be held on the 3rd of March. I shall be glad to hear that C—— was present. Whatever be the state of the weather, I recommend this period to your attention, for in the month of April there will be play.

I am, &c.

LETTER FROM THE MARQUIS OF —— TO M. DE L——.

February 17th 1771.

I hope, my dear neighbour, that my son has acquitted himself of the charge I gave him, to thank you in my name for the kindness you have shown in complying with the wishes of the parish of St. B——, by becoming their arbitrator. The poor people could not have done anything better for you. They would have made you a bishop, or the saint of their parish, had they been able, but to submit to you their interests and concerns appeared to them of greater importance and more decisive. The more you are their superior in

fortune, rank, and birth the more are you honoured by their choice, and the more agreeable must it prove to your feelings. I ought to feel jealous of you; for, be not offended at it, my chateau is in their parish as well as yours, and I am, besides, fifteen years older than you. But I consoled myself by saying—

" My neighbour appears stronger than I, and with country people vigour is a portion of wisdom: it inspires them with confidence and inclines them to subordination; and in reality force is the worthy pedestal of equity."

Be this as it may, they have elected you, my worthy neighbour, and I am very glad to see you thus justify the natural inclination your presence had inspired me, and which the fairness of your proceedings has so well confirmed.

I know you, my dear neighbour, for I have had some dealings with you, but I was not aware that all these people knew you as well, or, at least, that during your lifetime it would be said of you unanimously, at the close of mass, and at the very first word, that you were the most respectable and beloved of the whole parish, especially by the poor. I well know that in four provinces men of our rank universally say " M. de L—— is a worthy gentleman," and this is but too often applied to strong sportsmen, like Nimrod, who cane all that come near them, and are held up as bugbears to children. Every one, it is true, has his own notions: mine have been in vogue like those of others, and I solemnly declare to you, that I should be more flattered with such testimony in my favour than if I were appointed plenipotentiary at congress by the three most considerable powers in Europe.

It has besides afforded me another and still greatet pleasure: it has shown me that Providence favours the institution — for you are its best protector. I was therefore very sorry that you were prevented from being present at the first meeting. Neighbour, I summon you, with your leave, to appear at the second, were you a priest, dead, or married. I even do more, for I place the tribunal under your immediate protection; without you, all this business, done with a view to confer benefit, will fall to the ground.

If you neglect this, I shall go so far as to form rash opinions, and think that the vice of gentle blood has some how or other laid hold of you. Do you consider it as I do, that vile pride which on the one

part induces men to hold out a hand to every distributor of benefits and surcharges, to ask as favours the price of services, to beg all their lives for places and distinctions, or what is worse, to beg for money ; and, on the other part, makes them look down upon their brethren and equals, who happen to be born tradesmen and peasants, and think that they were demeaning themselves to take a seat upon a bench with those whose harvest they share, in the persuasion that a nickname or etiquette distinguishes and divides dust, and that the effigy and the motto change the alloy of the metal?

Tell those men to prostrate themselves before a dollar and you are sure to excite their scorn, if not their anger; but have patience, place dollar upon dollar, and as the pile grows higher you will perceive their assumed dignity decrease in proportion. They will at length sell their daughters, and even themselves, to gain possession of that baneful but infallible magnet of whatever belongs to vanity. They may be considered happy should no person attempt to extend to crime the effect of their subjection and delirium, and raise this perfidious heap so high as to conceal from their sight, conscience, principle, and honour.

Such, my dear neighbour, is the light in which the eyes of reason and experience enable me to view the principle of our mean and foolish vanity. If we are better than our neighbours by birth, the merit belongs to our forefathers, and not to ourselves; but even our progenitors never acquired that merit by looking down upon their companions and natural inferiors, for nobody could ever, by his own unaided exertions, obtain considerable advantages. The time when kings bestowed preferment and nobility is still very recent, so that nobody will confess he belongs to it. Every other proceeds from the people and public opinion.

You have but just now been made illustrious in this way. You will perhaps be told that tradesmen and peasants have been thus distinguished in other parishes. Undoubtedly because you were not there: but they were elected by their equals; you, by your inferiors. This makes it widely different. In your thirty-ninth year, whilst you were at your mansion, two thousand poor people left their cottages to declare that they elected you their arbitrator and judge; such was the first institution of kings, and the most sacred inauguration.

Therefore, my dear neighhour, I recommend and place under your protection our tribunal of conciliation, I perceived that you were glad at seeing N—— united to A——. Something more is wanted. He should reign there, he should judge, he should promote the joy of the landlord and the happiness of the country. I expect from your politeness that would do the honours at the meeting of the 3rd of March, or I give you warning, as it is necessary that those two head quarters, formerly at variance, now united and friendly, should meet, that I would rather bring the whole to M. N——, or declare war against you, and I should like to see whether the first man against whom I should have committed an act of hostility in the course of thirty years, would still be loved and honoured by every body. Meanwhile, I profess to be, with kind and respectful attachment,

My dear neighbour, &c.

M. L——'S REPLY TO THE MARQUIS OF M——.

March 26th 1771.

You wish it, Sir! I have therefore nothing further to examine. My incapacity will not be admitted, I must undertake it, and behold me at your disposal. What do you wish for more? Acknowledge what is possible, flatter less my self-love, and I shall always be ready to oblige you in spite of the reflections which you have so ably set at rest. I am glad to see F—— united to A——. You have been so kind as to comply with my wishes in that respect! what would I not do to pay this debt to you! This is truly a poor indemnity, but it is a free homage to which you are entitled. I have thus only to return you my thanks, and I proceed with closed eyes, considering myself most happy in having an opportunity of pleasing you, and deserving your favours. Permit me still another observation. You know not, Sir! (excuse the term) to what you expose yourself! Open your eyes, and imagine a young spark come to A——, from Paris, with the morose countenance of a magistrate who thinks less of the public than of himself; his first care being properly to line his stomach for fear of accidents, and then knitting his brows

to make the sign of the cross, after the fashion of the people of Normandy. Whatis the consequence? a sentence condemning the garden of A——, to furnish immediately and without delay twelve poplars that have been taken and carried away *ipso facto?* This is my whole operation. Are you satisfied?—not much. But how will it end?—I really do not know. To be brief, Sir, the poplars and the people are yours. I see very well that you will also have the magistrate. This produces another sentence, which adjudicates him to you. Dispose of your humble," &c.

The worthy gentleman, whose answer this is, did not write it till he had been present at the second meeting, where he did as much business by himself as all the others. In reality, a judge's superiority of rank exercises great influence over the dignity and efficacy of his sentences. Be this as it may, the kind-hearted old lord had the satisfaction of seeing his excellent new institution succeed. It might be well to follow this example, at least in the country, where unreasonableness and animosity, more than self-interest, are the cause of litigation. In general, peace cannot be too much simplified, nor can the means instituted to establish and perpetuate it be rendered too accessible. The justice that is only to approach us through science, is liable to be stopped in the avenues. It is said to be a necessary evil in great communities. This question, however, is foreign to our subject: but, as far as we are concerned, the first sentence we shall cause to be placed on the door of my little dwelling, will be this—

> Quiconque est loup agisse en loup,
> C'est le plus certain de beaucoup.
>
> LA FONTAINE.

END OF VOL. I.

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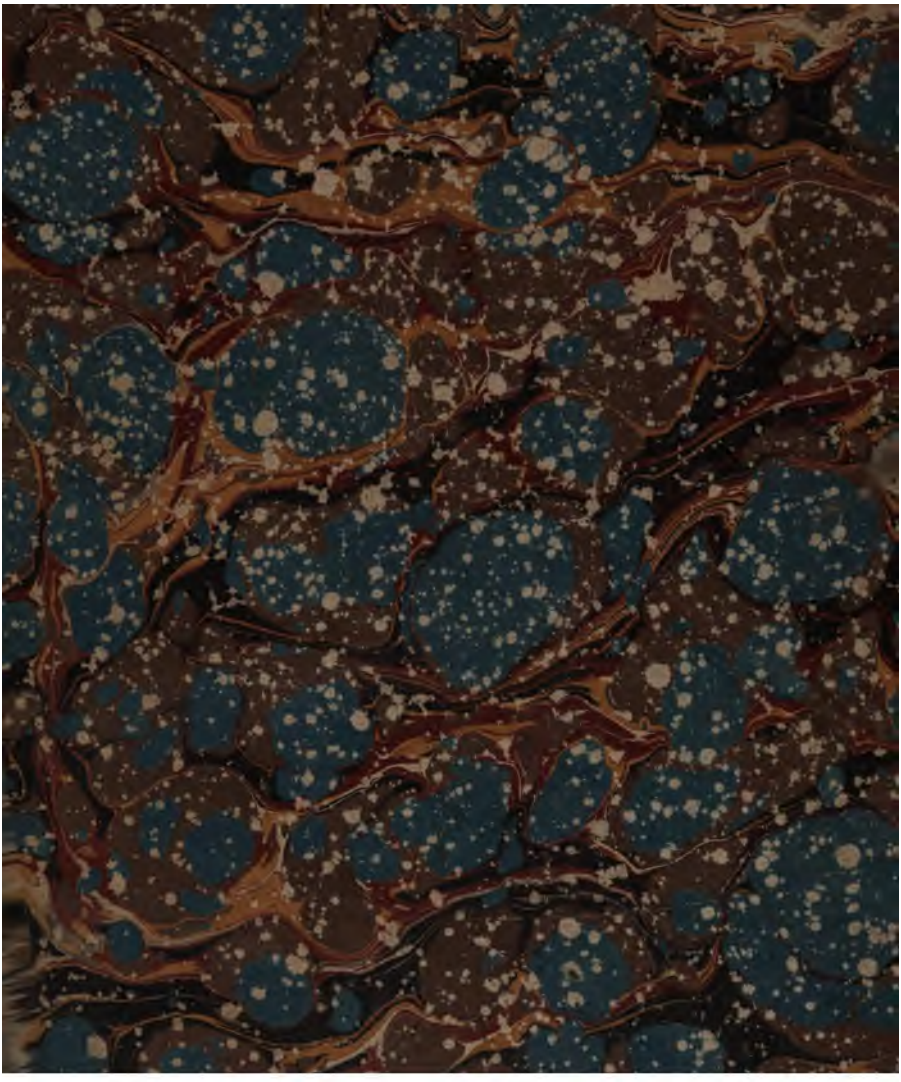

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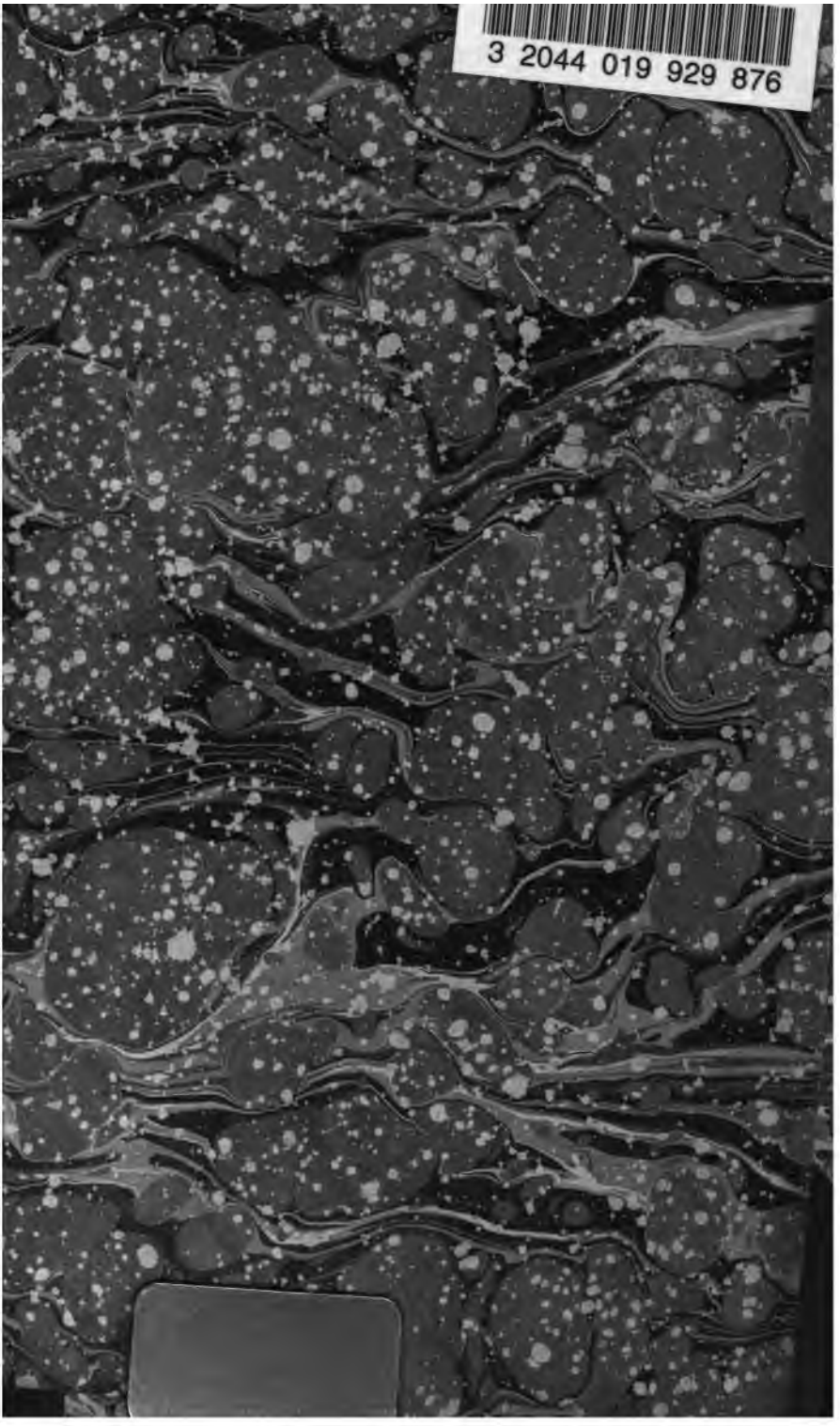
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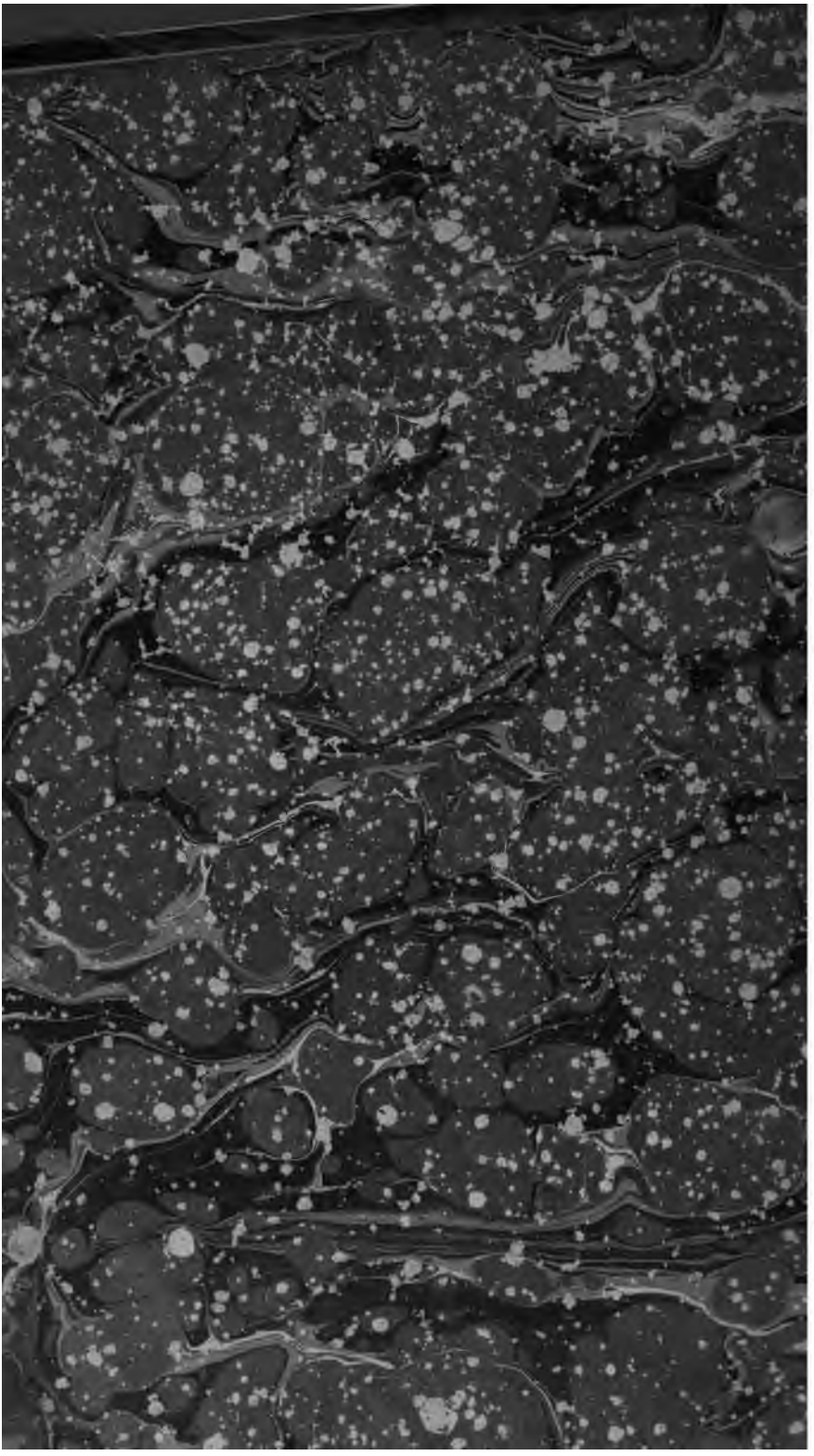

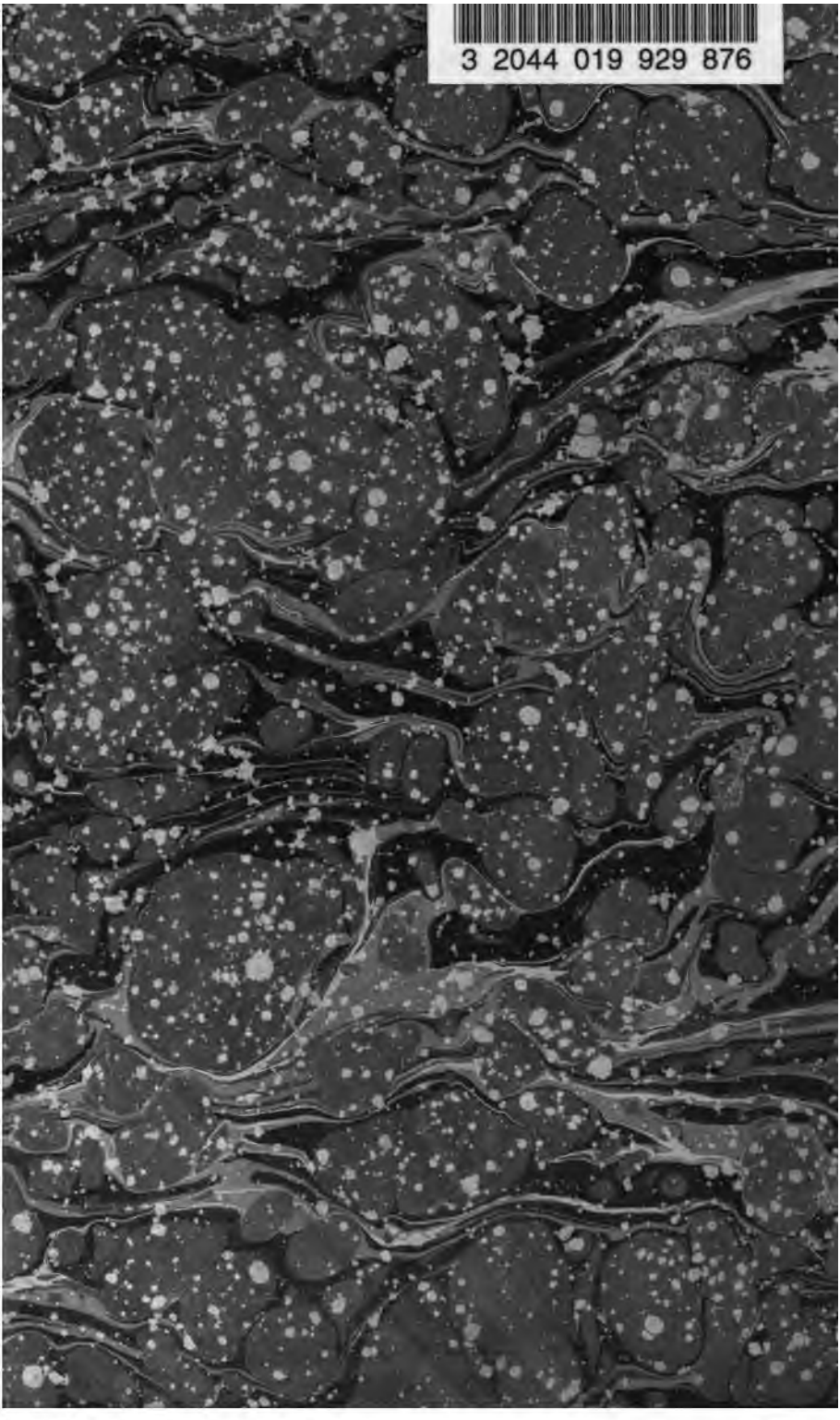
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